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The Bramleighs of Bishop's Folly.

CHAPTER XVII.
AT CASTELLO.



PRIVATE letter from a friend had told Jack Bramleigh that his father's opposition to the Government had considerably damaged his chance of being employed, but that he possibly might get a small command on the African station. With what joy then did he receive "the official," marked on H.M.'s service, informing him that he was appointed to the *Sneezer* despatch gunboat, to serve in the Mediterranean, and enjoining him to repair to town without unnecessary delay, to receive further orders.

He had forborne, as we have seen, to tell Julia his former tidings. They were not indeed of a nature to rejoice over, but here was great news. He only wanted two more years to be qualified for his "Post," and once a captain, he would have a position which might warrant his asking Julia to be his wife, and thus was it that the great dream of his whole existence was interwoven into his career, and his advancement as a sailor linked with his hopes as a lover; and surely it is well for us that ambitions in life appeal to

us in other and humbler ways than by the sense of triumph, and that there are better rewards for success than either the favour of princes or the insignia of rank.

To poor Jack, looking beyond that two years, it was not a three-decker, nor even frigate, it was the paradise of a cottage overgrown with sweetbriar and honeysuckle, that presented itself,—and a certain graceful figure, gauzy and floating, sitting in the porch, while he lay at her feet, lulled by the drowsy ripple of the little trout-stream, that ran close by. So possessed was he by this vision, so entirely and wholly did it engross him, that it was with difficulty he gave coherent replies to the questions poured in upon him at the breakfast-table, as to the sort of service he was about to be engaged in, and whether it was as good or a better thing than he had been expecting.

"I wish you joy, Jack," said Augustus. "You're a lucky dog to get afloat again so soon. You haven't been full six months on half-pay."

"I wish you joy too," said Temple, "and am thankful to Fate it is you, and not I, have to take the command of H.M.'s gunboat *Sneezer*."

"Perhaps, all things considered, it is as well as it is," said Jack dryly.

"It is a position of some importance. I mean it is not the mere command of a small vessel," said Marion haughtily; for she was always eager that every incident that befell the family should redound to their distinction, and subserve their onward march to greatness.

"Oh, Jack," whispered Nelly, "let us walk over to the cottage, and tell them the news;" and Jack blushed as he squeezed her hand in gratitude for the speech.

"I almost wonder they gave you this, Jack," said his father, "seeing how active a part I took against them; but I suppose there is some truth in the saying that Ministers would rather soothe enemies than succour friends."

"Don't you suspect, papa, that Lord Culduff may have had some share in this event? His influence, I know, is very great with his party," said Marion.

"I hope and trust not," burst out Jack; "rather than owe my promotion to that bewigged old dandy, I'd go and keep a lighthouse."

"A most illiberal speech," said Temple. "I was about to employ a stronger word, but still not stronger than my sense of its necessity."

"Remember, Temple," replied Jack, "I have no possible objection to his being *your* patron. I only protest that he shan't be *mine*. He may make you something ordinary or extraordinary to-morrow, and I'll never quarrel about it."

"I am grateful for the concession," said the other, bowing.

"If it was Lord Culduff that got you this step," said Colonel Bramleigh, "I must say nothing could be more delicate than his conduct; he never so much as hinted to me that he had taken trouble in the matter."

"He is *such* a gentleman!" said Marion, with a very enthusiastic emphasis on the word.

"Well, perhaps it's a very ignoble confession," said Nelly, "but I

frankly own I'd rather Jack owed his good fortune to his good fame than to all the peers in the calendar."

"What pains Ellen takes," said Marion, "to show that her ideas of life and the world are not those of the rest of us."

"She has me with her whenever she goes into the lobby," said Jack, "or I'll pair with Temple, who is sure to be on the stronger side."

"Your censure I accept as a compliment," said Temple.

"And is this all our good news has done for us,—to set us exchanging tart speeches and sharp repartees with each other?" said Colonel Bramleigh; "I declare it is a very ungracious way to treat pleasant tidings. Go out boys, and see if you couldn't find some one to dine with us, and wet Jack's commission, as they used to call it, long ago."

"We can have the L'Estranges and our amiable neighbour Captain Craufurd," said Marion, "but I believe our resources end with these."

"Why not look up the Frenchman you smashed some weeks ago, Jack?" said Augustus; "he ought to be about by this time, and it would only be common decency to show him some attention."

"With all my heart. I'll do anything you like but talk French with him. But where is he to be found?"

"He stops with Longworth," said Augustus, "which makes the matter awkward. Can we invite one without the other, and can we open our acquaintance with Longworth by an invitation to dinner?"

"Certainly not," chimed in Temple. "First acquaintance admits of no breaches of etiquette. Intimacies may, and rarely too, forgive such."

"What luck to have such a pilot to steer us through the narrow channel of proprieties," cried Jack, laughing.

"I think, too, it would be as well to remember," resumed Temple, "that Lord Culduff is our guest, and to whatever accidents of acquaintanceship we may be ready to expose ourselves, we have no right to extend these casualties to him."

"I suspect we are not likely to see his lordship to-day, at least; he has sent down his man to beg he may be excused from making his appearance at dinner: a slight attack of gout confines him to his room," said Marion.

"That's not the worst bit of news I've heard to-day," broke in Jack. "Dining in that old cove's company is the next thing to being tried by court-martial. I fervently hope he'll be on the sick list till I take my departure."

"As to getting these people together to-day, it's out of the question," said Augustus. "Let us say Saturday next, and try what we can do."

This was agreed upon, Temple being deputed to ride over to Longworth's, leaving to his diplomacy to make what further advances events seemed to warrant,—a trustful confidence in his tact to conduct a nice negotiation being a flattery more than sufficient to recompense his trouble. Jack and Nelly would repair to the cottage to secure the L'Estranges. Craufurd could be apprised by a note.

"Has Cutbill got the gout, too?" asked Jack. "I have not seen him this morning."

"No; that very cool gentleman took out my cob pony, Fritz, this morning at daybreak," said Augustus, "saying he was off to the mines at Lismaconnor, and wouldn't be back till evening."

"And do you mean to let such a liberty pass unnoticed?" asked Temple.

"A good deal will depend upon how Fritz looks after his journey. If I see that the beast has not suffered, it is just possible I may content myself with a mere intimation that I trust the freedom may not be repeated."

"You told me Anderson offered you two hundred for that cob," broke in Temple.

"Yes, and asked how much more would tempt me to sell him."

"If he were a peer of the realm, and took such a liberty with me, I'd not forgive him," said Temple, as he arose and left the room in a burst of indignation.

"I may say we are a very high-spirited family," said Jack gravely, "and I'll warn the world not to try any familiarities with us."

"Come away, naughty boy," whispered Eleanor; "you are always trailing your coat for some one to stand upon."

"Tell me, Nelly," said he, as they took their way through the pine-wood that led to the cottage, "tell me, Nelly, am I right or wrong in my appreciation—for I really want to be just and fair in the matter—are we Bramleighs confounded snobs?"

The downright honest earnestness with which he put the question made her laugh heartily, and for some seconds left her unable to answer him.

"I half suspect that we may be, Jack," said she, still smiling.

"I'm certain of one thing," continued he in the same earnest tone, "our distinguished guest deems us such. There is a sort of simpering enjoyment of all that goes on around him, and a condescending approval of us that seems to say, 'Go on, you'll catch the tone yet. You're not doing badly by any means.' He pushed me to the very limit of my patience the other day with this, and I had to get up from luncheon and leave the house to avoid being openly rude to him. Do you mind my lighting a cigar, Nelly, for I have got myself so angry that I want a weed to calm me down again?"

"Let us talk of something else; for on this theme I'm not much better tempered than yourself."

"There's a dear good girl," said he, drawing her towards him, and kissing her cheek. "I'd have sworn you felt as I did about this old fop; and we must be arrant snobs, Nelly, or else his coming down amongst us here would not have broken us all up, setting us exchanging sneers and scoffs, and criticizing each other's knowledge of life. Confound the old humbug; let us forget him."

They walked along without exchanging a word for full ten minutes or

more, till they reached the brow of the cliff, from which the pathway led down to the cottage. "I wonder when I shall stand here again?" said he, pausing. "Not that I'm going on any hazardous service, or to meet a more formidable enemy than a tart flag-captain; but the world has such strange turns and changes, that a couple of years may do anything with a man's destiny." 7

"A couple of years may make you a post-captain, Jack; and that will be quite enough to change your destiny."

He looked affectionately towards her for a moment, and then turned away to hide the emotion he could not master.

"And then, Jack," said she caressingly, "it will be a very happy day that shall bring us to this spot again."

"Who knows, Nelly?" said he, with a degree of agitation that surprised her. "I haven't told you that Julia and I had a quarrel the last time we met."

"A quarrel!"

"Well, it was something very like one. I told her there were things about her manner,—certain ways she had,—that I didn't like; and I spoke very seriously to her on the subject. I didn't go beating about, but said she was too much of a coquette."

"Oh, Jack!"

"It's all very well to be shocked, and cry out, 'Oh, Jack!' but isn't it true? haven't you seen it yourself? hasn't Marion said some very strange things about it?"

"My dear Jack, I needn't tell you that we girls are not always fair in our estimates of each other, even when we think we are,—and it is not always that we want to think so. Julia is not a coquette in any sense that the word carries censure, and you were exceedingly wrong to tell her she was."

"That's how it is!" cried he, pitching his cigar away in impatience. "There's a freemasonry amongst you that calls you all to arms the moment one is attacked. Isn't it open to a man to tell the girl he hopes to make his wife that there are things in her manner he doesn't approve of and would like changed?"

"Certainly not; at least it would require some nicer tact than yours to approach such a theme with safety."

"Temple, perhaps, could do it," said he, sneeringly.

"Temple certainly would not attempt it."

Jack made a gesture of impatience, and, as if desirous to change the subject, said, "What's the matter with our distinguished guest? Is he ill, that he won't dine below-stairs to-day?"

"He calls it a slight return of his Greek fever, and begs to be excused from presenting himself at dinner."

"He and Temple have been writing little three-cornered notes to each other all the morning. I suppose it is diplomatic usage."

The tone of irritation he spoke in seemed to show that he was actually

seeking for something to vent his anger upon, and trying to provoke some word of contradiction or dissent ; but she was silent, and for some seconds they walked on without speaking.

"Look ! " cried he, suddenly ; "there goes Julia. Do you see her yonder on the path up the cliff ; and who is that clambering after her ? I'll be shot if it's not Lord Culduff."

"Julia has got her drawing-book, I see. They're on some sketching excursion."

"He wasn't long in throwing off his Greek fever, eh ? " cried Jack, indignantly. "It's cool, isn't it, to tell the people in whose house he is stopping that he's too ill to dine with them, and then set out gallivanting in this fashion."

"Poor old man ! " said she, in a tone of half scornful pity.

"Was I right about Julia now ? " cried he angrily. "I told you for whose captivity all her little gracefulnesses were intended. I saw it the first night he stood beside her at the piano. As Marion said, she is determined to bring him down. She saw it as well as I did."

"What nonsense you are talking, Jack ; as if Julia would condescend——"

"There's no condescension, Nelly," he broke in. "The man is a lord, and the woman he marries will be a peeress, and there's not another country in Europe in which that word means as much. I take it we needn't go on to the cottage now ? "

"I suppose we could scarcely overtake them ? "

"Overtake them ! Why should we try ? Even *my* tact, Nelly, that you sneered at so contemptuously a while ago, would save me from such a blunder. Come, let's go home and forget, if we can, all that we came about. I at least will try and do so."

"My dear dear Jack, this is very foolish jealousy."

"I am not jealous, Nelly. I'm angry ; but it is with myself. I ought to have known what humble pretensions mine were, and I ought to have known how certainly a young lady, bred as young ladies are now-a-days, would regard them—as less than humble ; but it all comes of this idle shore-going good-for-nothing life. They'll not catch me at it again, that's all."

"Just listen to me patiently, Jack. Listen to me for one moment."

"Not for half a moment. I can guess everything you want to say to me, and I tell you frankly, I don't care to hear it. Tell me whatever you like to-morrow—" He tried to finish his speech, but his voice grew thick and faltering, and he turned away and was silent.

They spoke little to each other as they walked homewards. A chance remark on the weather, or the scenery, was all that passed till they reached the little lawn before the door.

"You'll not forget your pledge, Jack, for to-morrow ? " said Ellen, as he turned towards her before ascending the steps.

"I'll not forget it," said he coldly, and he moved off as he spoke, and entered an alley of the shrubbery.

CHAPTER XVIII.

A DULL DINNER.

THE family dinner on that day at Castello was somewhat dull. The various attempts to secure a party for the ensuing Saturday, which had been fixed on to celebrate Jack's promotion, had proved failures. When Temple arrived at Longworth, he learned that the host and his guest were from home and not to return for some days—we have seen how it fared as to the L'Estranges—so that the solitary success was Captain Craufurd, a gentleman who certainly had not won the suffrages of the great house.

There were two vacant places besides at the table; for butlers are fond of recording, by napkins and covers, how certain of our friends assume to treat us, and thus as it were contrast their own formal observances of duty with the laxer notions of their betters.

"Lord Culduff is not able to dine with us," said Colonel Bramleigh, making the apology as well to himself as to the company.

"No, papa," said Marion; "he hopes to appear in the drawing-room in the evening."

"If not too much tired by his long walk," broke in Jack.

"What walk are you dreaming of?" asked Marion.

"An excursion he made this morning down the coast, sketching or pretending to sketch. Nelly and I saw him clambering up the side of a cliff——"

"Oh, quite impossible; you must be mistaken."

"No," said Nelly, "there was no mistake. I saw him as plainly as I see you now; besides, it is not in these wild regions so distinguished a figure is like to find its counterpart."

"But why should he not take his walk? why not sketch, or amuse himself in any way he pleased?" asked Temple.

"Of course it was open to him to do so," said the colonel; "only that to excuse his absence he ought not to have made a pretext of being ill."

"I think men are 'ill' just as they are 'out,'" said Temple. "I am ill if I am asked to do what is disagreeable to me, as I am out to the visit of a bore."

"So that to dine with us was disagreeable to Lord Culduff?" asked Jack.

"It was evidently either an effort to task his strength, or an occasion which called for more exertion than he felt equal to," said Temple, pompously.

"By Jove!" cried Jack, "I hope I'll never be a great man! I trust sincerely I may never arrive at that eminence in which it will task my energies to eat my dinner and chat with the people on either side of me."

"Lord Culduff converses: he does not chat; please to note the distinction, Jack."

"That's like telling me he doesn't walk but he swaggers."

It was fortunate at this moment, critical enough as regarded the temper of all parties, that Mr. Cutbill entered, full of apologies for being late, and bursting to recount the accidents that befell him and all the incidents of his day. A quick glance around the table assured him of Lord Culduff's absence, and it was evident from the sparkle of his eye that the event was not disagreeable to him.

"Is my noble friend on the sick list?" asked he with a smile.

"Indisposed," said Temple, with the air of one who knew the value of a word that was double-shotted.

"I've got news that will soon rally him," continued Cutbill. "They've struck a magnificent vein this morning, and within eighty yards of the surface. Plmmys, the Welsh inspector, pronounced it good Cardiff, and says, from the depth of 'the load' that it must go a long way."

"Harding did not give me as encouraging news yesterday," said Colonel Bramleigh with a dubious smile.

"My tidings date from this morning,—yesterday was the day before the battle; besides, what does Harding know about coal?"

"He knows a little about everything," said Augustus.

"That makes all the difference. What people want is not the men who know things currently, but know them well and thoroughly. Eh, captain," said he to Jack, "what would you say to popular notions about the navy?"

"Cutty's right," said Jack. "Amateurship is all humbug."

"Who is Longworth?" asked Cutbill. "Philip Longworth?"

"A neighbour of ours; we are not acquainted, but we know that there is such a person," said Colonel Bramleigh.

"He opines," continued Cutbill, "that this vein of ours runs direct from his land, and I suspect he's not wrong; and he wants to know what we mean to do—he'll either sell or buy. He came over this morning to Kilmannock with a French friend, and we took our breakfast together. Nice fellows both of them, and wide awake, too, especially the Frenchman. He was with Lesseps in Egypt, in what capacity I couldn't find out; but I see he's a shrewd fellow."

"With Lesseps," said Colonel Bramleigh, showing a quicker and more eager interest than before, for his lawyer had told him that the French claimant to his property had been engaged on the works of the Suez Canal.

"Yes; he spoke as if he knew Lesseps well, and talked of the whole undertaking like one who understood it."

"And what is he doing here?"

"Writing a book, I fancy; an Irish tour—one of those mock-sentimentalities, with bad politics and false morality, Frenchmen ventilate about England. He goes poking into the cabins and asking the people about their grievances; and now he says he wants to hear the other side, and learn what the gentlemen say."

"We'll have to ask him over here," said Colonel Bramleigh coolly, as if the thought had occurred to him then for the first time.

"He'll amuse you, I promise you," said Cutbill.

"I'd like to meet him," said Jack. "I had the ill-luck to bowl him over in the hunting-field, and cost him a broken leg. I'd like to make all the excuses in my power to him."

"He bears no malice about it; he said it was all his own fault, and that you did your best to pick him up, but your horse bolted with you."

"Let's have him to dinner by all means," said Augustus; "and now that Temple has made a formal visit, I take it we might invite him by a polite note."

"You must wait till he returns the call," said Marion stiffly.

"Not if we want to show a courteous desire to make his acquaintance," said Temple. "Attentions can be measured as nicely and as minutely as medicaments."

"All I say," said Jack, "is, have him soon, or I may chance to miss him; and I'm rather curious to have a look at him."

Colonel Bramleigh turned a full look at Jack, as though his words had some hidden meaning in them, but the frank and easy expression of the sailor's face reassured him at once.

"I hope the fellow won't put us in his book," said Temple. "You are never quite safe with these sort of people."

"Are we worth recording?" asked Jack with a laugh.

Temple was too indignant to make any answer, and Cutbill went on. "The authorship is only a suspicion of mine, remember. It was from seeing him constantly jotting down little odds and ends in his note-book that I came to that conclusion; and Frenchmen are not much given to minute inquiries if they have not some definite object in view."

Again was Bramleigh's attention arrested, but as before, he saw that the speaker meant no more than the words in their simplest acceptance conveyed.

A violent ringing of the door-bell startled the company, and after a moment's pause of expectancy, a servant entered to say, that a Government messenger had arrived with some important despatches for Lord Culduff, which required personal delivery and acceptance.

"Will you step up, Mr. Cutbill, and see if his lordship is in his room?"

"I'll answer for it he's not," said Jack to his father.

Cutbill rose, however, and went on his mission, but instead of returning to the dining-room it was perceived that he proceeded to find the messenger, and conduct him upstairs.

"Well, Nelly," said Marion, in a whisper, "what do you say now, is it so certain that it was Lord Culduff you saw this morning?"

"I don't know what to make of it. I was fully as sure as Jack was."

"I'll wager he's been offered Paris," said Temple, gravely.

"Offered Paris?" cried Jack; "what do you mean?"

"I mean the embassy, of course," replied he contemptuously. "Without," added he, "they want him in the Cabinet."

"And is it really by men like this, the country is governed?" said Nelly, with a boldness that seemed the impulse of indignation.

"I'm afraid so," said Marion scornfully. "Mr. Canning and Lord Palmerston were men very like this,—were they not, Temple?"

"Precisely; Lord Cuduff is exactly of the same order, however humble the estimate Ellen may form of such people."

"I'm all impatience for the news," said Augustus. "I wish Cutbill would come down at once."

"I'll take the odds that he goes to F. O.," said Temple.

"What the deuce could he do in China?" cried Jack, whose ear had led him into a cruel blunder.

Temple scarcely smiled at what savoured of actual irreverence, and added, "If so, I'll ask to be made private secretary."

"Mr. Temple, sir, his lordship would be glad to see you upstairs for a moment," said a footman, entering. And Temple arose and left the room, with a pride that might have accompanied him if summoned to a cabinet council.

"More mysteries of State," cried Jack. "I declare, girls, the atmosphere of political greatness is almost suffocating me. I wonder how Cutty stands it!"

A general move into the drawing-room followed this speech, and as Jack sauntered in he slipped his arm within Nelly's and led her towards a window. "I can't bear this any longer, Nelly,—I must trip my anchor and move away. I'd as soon be lieutenant to a port admiral as live here. You're all grown too fine for me."

"That's not it at all, Jack," said she, smiling. "I see how you've been trying to bully yourself by bullying us this hour back; but it will be all right to-morrow. We'll go over to the cottage after breakfast."

"You may; I'll not, I promise you," said he, blushing deeply.

"Yes, you will, my dear Jack," said she, coaxingly; "and you'll be the first to laugh at your own foolish jealousy besides,—if Julia is not too angry with you to make laughing possible."

"She may be angry or pleased, it's all one to me now," said he passionately. "When I told her she was a coquette, I didn't believe it; but, by Jove, she has converted me to the opinion pretty quickly."

"You're a naughty boy, and you're in a bad humour, and I'll say no more to you now."

"Say it now, I advise you, if you mean to say it," said he shortly; but she laughed at his serious face, and turned away without speaking.

"Isn't the cabinet council sitting late?" asked Augustus of Marion. "They have been nigh two hours in conference."

"I take it it must be something of importance," replied she.

"Isn't Cutbill in it?" asked Augustus, mockingly.

"I saw Mr. Cutbill go down the avenue, with his cigar in his mouth, just after we came into the drawing-room."

"I'll go and try to pump him," said Jack. "One might do a grand

thing on the Stock Exchange if he could get at State secrets like these." And as Jack went out a silence fell over the party, only broken by the heavy breathing of Colonel Bramleigh as he slept behind his newspaper. At last the door opened gently, and Temple moved quietly across the room, and tapping his father on the shoulder, whispered something in his ear. "What—eh?" cried Colonel Bramleigh, waking up. "Did you say 'out'?" Another whisper ensued, and the colonel arose and left the room, followed by Temple.

"Isn't Temple supremely diplomatic to-night?" said Nelly.

"I'm certain he is behaving with every becoming reserve and decorum," said Marion, in a tone of severe rebuke.

When Colonel Bramleigh entered the library, Temple closed and locked the door, and in a voice of some emotion said, "Poor Lord Cuduff; it's a dreadful blow. I don't know how he'll bear up against it."

"I don't understand it," said Bramleigh, peevishly. "What's this about a change of Ministry and a dissolution? Did you tell me the Parliament was dissolved?"

"No, sir. I said that a dissolution was probable. The Ministry have been sorely pressed in the Lords about Cuduff's appointment, and a motion to address the Crown to cancel it has only been met by a majority of three. So small a victory amounts to a defeat, and the Premier writes to beg Lord Cuduff will at once send in his resignation, as the only means to save the party."

"Well, if it's the only thing to do, why not do it?"

"Cuduff takes a quite different view of it. He says that to retire is to abdicate his position in public life; that it was Lord Rigglesworth's duty to stand by a colleague to the last; that every Minister makes it a point of honour to defend a subordinate; and that——"

"I only half follow you. What was the ground of the attack? Had he fallen into any blunder—made any serious mistake?"

"Nothing of the kind, sir; they actually complimented his abilities, and spoke of his rare capacity. It was one of those bursts of hypocrisy we have every now and then in public life, to show the world how virtuous we are. They raked up an old story of thirty years ago of some elopement or other, and affected to see in this escapade a reason against his being employed to represent the Crown."

"I'm not surprised—not at all surprised. There is a strong moral feeling in the heart of the nation, that no man, however great his abilities, can outrage with impunity."

"If they dealt with him thus hardly in the Lords, we can fancy how he will be treated in the Lower House, where Rigby Norton has given notice of a motion respecting his appointment. As Lord Rigglesworth writes, 'R. N. has got up your whole biography, and is fully bent on making you the theme of one of his amusing scurrilities. Is it wise, is it safe to risk this? He'll not persevere,—he could not persevere,—in his

motion, if you send in your resignation. We could not—at least so Gore, our whip, says—be sure of a majority were we to divide; and even a majority of, say thirty, to proclaim you moral, would only draw the whole press to open your entire life, and make the world ring with your, I suppose, very common and every-day iniquities.”

“I declare I do not see what can be alleged against this advice. It seems to me most forcible and irrefragable.”

“Very forcible, as regards the position of the Cabinet; but, as Lord Culduff says, ruin, positive ruin to him.”

“Ruin of his own causing.”

Temple shrugged his shoulders in a sort of contemptuous impatience; the sentiment was one not worth a reply.

“At all events, has he any other course open to him?”

“He thinks he has; at least, he thinks that, with your help and co-operation, there may be another course. The attack is to come from below the gangway on the Opposition side. It was to sit with these men you contested a county, and spent nigh twenty thousand pounds. You have great claims on the party. You know them all personally, and have much influence with them. Why, then, not employ it in his behalf?”

“To suppress the motion, you mean?”

Temple nodded.

“They’d not listen to it, not endure it for a moment. Norton wouldn’t give up an attack for which he had prepared himself, if he were to find out in the interval that the object of it was an angel. As I heard him say one day at ‘the Reform,’ ‘Other men have their specialities. One fellow takes sugar, one the malt-duties, one Servia, or may be, Ireland; my line is a good smashing personality. Show me a fellow—of course I mean a political opponent—who has been giving himself airs as a colonial governor, or “swelling” it as a special envoy at a foreign court, and if I don’t find something in his despatches to exhibit him as a false prophet, a dupe, or a blunderer, and if I can’t make the House laugh at him, don’t call me Rigby Norton.’ He knows he does these things better than any man in England, and he does them in a spirit that never makes him an enemy.”

“Culduff says that N. is terribly hard up. He was hit heavily at Goodwood, and asked for time to pay.”

“Just what he has been doing for the last twenty years. There are scores of ships that no underwriters would accept making safe voyages half across the globe. No, no, he’ll rub on for many a day in the same fashion. Besides, if he shouldn’t, what then?”

Temple made a significant gesture with his thumb in the palm of his hand.

“That’s all your noble friend knows about England, then. See what comes of a man passing his life among foreigners. I suppose a Spanish or an Italian deputy mightn’t give much trouble, nor oppose any strenuous resistance to such a dealing; but it won’t do here—it will not.”

“Lord Culduff knows the world as well as most men, sir.”

"Yes, one world, I'm sure he does! A world of essenced old dandies and painted dowagers, surrounded by thieving lacqueys and cringing followers; where everything can be done by bribery, and nothing without it. But that's not England, I'm proud to say; nor will it be, I hope, for many a day to come."

"I wish, sir, you could be induced to give your aid to Culduff in this matter. I need not say what an influence it would exert over my own fortunes."

"You must win your way, Temple, by your own merits," said he haughtily. "I'd be ashamed to think that a son of mine owed any share of his success in life to ignoble acts or backstairs influence. Go back and tell Lord Culduff from me, that so far as I know it, Lord Rigglesworth's advice is my own. No wise man ever courts a public scandal; and he would be less than wise to confront one, with the certainty of being overwhelmed by it."

"Will you see him, sir? Will you speak to him yourself?"

"I'd rather not. It would be a needless pain to each of us."

"I suspect he means to leave this to-night."

"Not the worst thing he could do."

"But you'll see him, to say good-by?"

"Certainly; and all the more easily if we have no conversation in the meanwhile. Who's that knocking? Is the door locked?"

Temple hastened to open the door, and found Mr. Cutbill begging to have five minutes' conversation with Colonel Bramleigh.

"Leave us together, Temple, and tell Marion to send me in some tea. You'll have tea, too, won't you, Mr. Cutbill?"

"No, thank you; I'll ask for wine and water later. At present I want a little talk with you. Our noble friend has got it hot and heavy," said he, as Temple withdrew, leaving Bramleigh and himself together; "but it's nothing to what will come out when Norton brings it before the House. I suppose there hasn't been such a scandal for years as he'll make of it."

"I declare, Mr. Cutbill, as long as the gentleman continues my guest, I'd rather avoid than invite any discussion of his antecedents," said Bramleigh pompously.

"All very fine, if you could stop the world from talking of them."

"My son has just been with me, and I have said to him, sir, as I have now repeated to you, that it is a theme I will not enter upon."

"You won't, won't you?"

"No, sir, I will not."

"The more fool you, then, that's all."

"What, sir, am I to be told this to my face, under my own roof? Can you presume to address these words to me?"

"I meant nothing offensive. You needn't look like a turkey-cock. All the gobble-gobble in the world wouldn't frighten me. I came in here in a friendly spirit. I was handsomely treated in this house, and I'd like to make a return for it; that's why I'm here, Bramleigh."

"You will pardon me if I do not detect the friendliness you speak of in the words you have just uttered."

"Perhaps I was a little too blunt—a little too—what shall I call it?—abrupt; but what I wanted to say was this: here's the nicest opportunity in the world, not only to help a lame dog over the stile, but to make a good hound of him afterwards."

"I protest, sir, I cannot follow you. Your bluntness, as you call it, was at least intelligible."

"Don't be in a passion. Keep cool, and listen to me. If this motion is made about Culduff, and comes to a debate, there will be such stories told as would smash forty reputations. I'd like to see which of us would come well out of a biography, treated as a party attack in the House of Commons. At all events *he* couldn't face it. Stand by him, then, and get him through it. Have patience; just hear what I have to say. The thing can be done; there's eight days to come before it can be brought on. I know the money-lender has three of Norton's acceptances—for heavy sums, two of them. Do you see now what I'm driving at?"

"I may possibly see so much, sir, but I am unable to see why I should move in the matter."

"I'll show you, then. The noble viscount is much smitten by a certain young lady upstairs, and intends to propose for her. Yes, I know it, and I'll vouch for it. Your eldest daughter may be a peeress, and though the husband isn't very young, neither is the title. I think he said he was the eighth lord—seventh or eighth, I'm not sure which—and taking the rank and the coal-mine together, don't you think she might do worse?"

"I will say, sir, that frankness like yours I've never met before."

"That's the very thing I'd like to hear you say of me. There's no quality I pride myself on so much as my candour."

"You have ample reason, sir."

"I feel it. I know it. Direct lines and a wide gauge—I mean in the way of liberality—that's my motto. I go straight to my terminus, wherever it is."

"It is not every man can make his profession the efficient ally of his morality."

"An engineer can, and there's nothing so like life as a new line of railroad. But to come back. You see now how the matter stands. If the arrangement suits you, the thing can be done."

"You have a very business-like way of treating these themes."

"If I hadn't, I couldn't treat them at all. What I say to myself is, Will it pay? first of all, and secondly, How much will it pay? And that's the one test for everything. Have the divines a more telling argument against a life of worldliness and self-indulgence than when they ask, Will it pay? We contract for everything, even for going to heaven."

"If I could hope to rival your eminently practical spirit, Mr. Cutbill, I'd ask how far—to what extent—has Lord Culduff made you the confidant of his intentions?"

"You mean, has he sent me here this evening to make a proposal to you?"

"No, not exactly that; but has he intimated, has he declared—for intimation wouldn't suffice—has he declared his wish to be allied to my family."

"He didn't say, 'Cutbill, go down and make a tender in my name for her,' if you mean that."

"I opine not, sir," said Bramleigh haughtily.

"But when I tell you it's all right," said Cutbill, with one of his most knowing looks, "I think that ought to do."

"I take it, sir, that you mean courteously and fairly by me. I feel certain that you have neither the wish nor the intention to pain me, but I am forced to own that you import into questions of a delicate nature a spirit of commercial profit and loss, which makes all discussion of them harsh and disagreeable. This is not, let me observe to you, a matter of coal or a new cutting on a railroad."

"And are you going to tell Tom Cutbill that out of his own line of business—when he isn't up to his knees in earthworks, and boring a tunnel—that he's a fool and a nincompoop?"

"I should be sorry to express such a sentiment."

"Ay, or feel it; why don't you say that?"

"I will go even so far, sir, and say I should be sorry to feel it."

"That's enough. No offence meant, none is taken. Here's how it is now. Authorize me to see Joel about those bills of Norton's. Give me what the French call a *carte blanche* to negotiate, and I'll promise you I'll not throw your ten-pound notes away. Not that it need ever come to ten pound notes, for Rigby does these things for the pure fun of them, and if any good fellow drops in on him of a morning, and says, 'Don't raise a hue and cry about that poor beggar,' or 'Don't push that fellow over the cliff,' he's just the man to say, 'Well, I'll not go on. I'll let it stand over,' or he'll even get up and say, 'When I asked leave to put this question to the right honourable gentleman, I fully believed in the authentic character of the information in my possession. I have, however, since then discovered'—this, that, and the other. Don't you know how these things always finish? There's a great row, a great hubbub, and the man that retracts is cheered by both sides of the House."

"Suppose, then, he withdraws his motion,—what then? The discussion in the Lords remains on record, and the mischief, so far as Lord Cuduff is concerned, is done."

"I know that. He'll not have his appointment; he'll take his pension and wait. What he says is this, 'There are only three diplomatists in all England, and short of a capital felony, any of the three may do anything. I have only to stand out and sulk,' says he, 'and they'll be on their knees to me yet.'"

"He yields, then, to a passing hurricane," said Bramleigh, pompously.

"Just so. He's taking shelter under an archway till he can call a

Hansom. Now you have the whole case; and as talking is dry work, might I ring for a glass of sherry and seltzer?"

"By all means. I am ashamed not to have thought of it before. This is a matter for much thought and deliberation," said Bramleigh, as the servant withdrew after bringing the wine. It is too eventful a step to be taken suddenly."

"If not done promptly it can't be done at all. A week isn't a long time to go up to town and get through a very knotty negotiation. Joel isn't a common money-lender, like Drake or Downie. You can't go to his office except on formal business. If you want to do a thing in the way of accommodation with him, you'll have to take him down to the 'Ship,' and give him a nice little fish dinner, with the very best Sauterne you can find; and when you're sitting out on the balcony over the black mud,—the favourite spot men smoke their cheroots in,—then open your business; and though he knows well it was all 'a plant,' he'll not resent it, but take it kindly and well."

"I am certain that so nice a negotiation could not be in better hands than yours, Mr. Cutbill."

"Well, perhaps I might say without vanity, it might be in worse. So much for that part of the matter; now, as to the noble viscount himself. I am speaking as a man of the world to another man of the world, and speaking in confidence too. You don't join in that hypocritical cant against Cuduff, because he had once in his life been what they call a man of gallantry? I mean, Bramleigh, that you don't go in for that outrageous humbug of spotless virtue, and the rest of it?"

Bramleigh smiled, and as he passed his hand over his mouth to hide a laugh, the twinkle of his eyes betrayed him.

"I believe I am old enough to know that one must take the world as it is pleased to present itself," said he cautiously.

"And not want to think it better or worse than it really is?"

Bramleigh nodded assent.

"Now we understand each other, as I told you the other evening we were sure to do when we had seen more of each other. Cuduff isn't a saint, but he's a Peer of Parliament; he isn't young, but he has an old title, and if I'm not much mistaken, he'll make a pot of money out of this mine. Such a man has only to go down into the Black Country or amongst the mills, to have his choice of some of the best-looking girls in England, with a quarter of a million of money; isn't that fact?"

"It is pretty like it."

"So that, on the whole, I'll say this is a good thing, Bramleigh,—a right good thing. As Wishart said the other night in the House, 'A new country,'—speaking of the States,—'a new country wants alliances with old States;' so a new family wants connection with the old historic houses."

Colonel Bramleigh's face grew crimson, but he coughed to keep down his rising indignation, and slightly bowed his head.

"You know as well as I do, that the world has only two sorts of people, nobs and snobs; one has no choice,—if you're not one, you must be the other."

"And yet, sir, men of mind and intellect have written about the untitled nobility of England."

"Silver without the hall-mark, Bramleigh, won't bring six shillings an ounce, just because nobody can say how far it's adulterated; it's the same with people."

"Your tact, sir, is on a par with your wisdom."

"And perhaps you haven't a high opinion of either," said Cutbill, with a laugh that showed he felt no irritation whatever. "But look here, Bramleigh, this will never do. If there's nothing but blarney or banter between us we'll never come to business. If you agree to what I've been proposing,—you have only *me* to deal with, the noble lord isn't in the game at all,—he'll leave this to-night,—it's right and proper he should; he'll go up to the mines for a few days, and amuse himself with quartz and red sandstone; and when I write or telegraph,—most likely telegraph, 'the thing is safe;' he'll come back here and make his proposal in all form."

"I am most willing to give my assistance to any project that may rescue Lord Culduff from this unpleasant predicament. Indeed, having myself experienced some of the persecution which political hatred can carry into private life, I feel a sort of common cause with him; but I protest at the same time—distinctly protest—against anything like a pledge as regards his lordship's views towards one of my family. I mean I give no promise."

"I see," said Cutbill, with a look of intense cunning. "You'll do the money part. Providence will take charge of the rest. Isn't that it?"

"Mr. Cutbill, you occasionally push my patience pretty hard. What I said, I said seriously and advisedly."

"Of course. Now then, give me a line to your banker to acknowledge my draft up to a certain limit, say five hundred. I think five ought to do it."

"It's a smart sum, Mr. Cutbill."

"The article's cheap at the money. Well, well, I'll not anger you. Write me the order, and let me be off."

Bramleigh sat down at his table, and wrote off a short note to his junior partner in the bank, which he sealed and addressed, and handing it to Cutbill said, "This will credit you to the amount you spoke of. It will be advanced to you as a loan without interest, to be repaid within two years."

"All right; the thought of repayment will never spoil my night's rest. I only wish all my debts would give me as little trouble."

"You ought to have none, Mr. Cutbill; a man of your abilities, at the top of a great profession, and with a reputation second to none, should, if he were commonly prudent, have ample means at his disposal."

"But that's the thing I am not, Bramleigh. I'm not one of your safe

fellows. I drive my engine at speed, even where the line is shaky and the rails ill laid. Good-by; my respects to the ladies; tell Jack, if he's in town within the week to look me up at Limmers." He emptied the sherry into a tumbler as he spoke, drank it off, and left the room.

CHAPTER XIX.

A DEPARTURE.

SOME days had gone over since the scene just recorded in our last chapter, and the house at Castello presented a very different aspect from its late show of movement and pleasure.

Lord Culduff, on the pretence of his presence being required at the mines, had left on the same night that Cutbill took his departure for England. On the morning after Jack also went away. He had passed the night writing and burning letters to Julia; for no sooner had he finished an epistle, than he found it too cruel, too unforgiving, too unfeeling by half; and when he endeavoured to moderate his just anger, he discovered signs of tenderness in his reproaches that savoured of submission. It would not be quite fair to be severe on Jack's failures, trying as he was to do what has puzzled much wiser and craftier heads than his. To convey all the misery he felt at parting from her with a just measure of reproach for her levity towards him, to mete out his love and his anger in due doses, to say enough, but never too much, and finally to let her know that, though he went off in a huff, it was to carry her image in his heart through all his wanderings, never forgetting her for a moment, whether he was carrying despatches to Cadiz or coaling at Malta—to do all these, I say, becomingly and well, was not an easy task, and especially for one who would rather have been sent to cut out a frigate under the guns of a fortress than indite a despatch to "my Lords of the Admiralty."

From the short sleep which followed all his abortive attempts at a letter he was awakened by his servant telling him it was time to dress and be off. Drearier moments there are not in life than those which herald in a departure of a dark morning in winter, with the rain swooping in vast sheets against the window-panes, and the cold blast whistling through the leafless trees. Never do the candles seem to throw so little light as these do now through the dreary room, all littered and disordered by the preparations for the road. What fears and misgivings beset one at such a moment! What reluctance to go, and what a positive sense of fear one feels, as though the journey were a veritable leap in the dark, and that the whole fortunes of a life were dependent on that instant of resolution.

Poor Jack tried to battle with such thoughts as these by reminding himself of his duty and the calls of the service; he asked himself again and again, if it were out of such vacillating, wavering materials, a sailor's heart should be fashioned? was this the stuff that made Nelsons or Collingwoods? And though there was but little immediate prospect of a career of

distinction, his sense of duty taught him to feel that the routine life of peace was a greater trial to a man's patience than all the turmoil and bustle of active service.

"The more I cling to remain here," muttered he, as he descended the stairs, "the more certain am I that it's pure weakness and folly."

"What's that you are muttering about weakness and folly, Jack?" said Nelly, who had got up to see him off, and give him the last kiss before he departed.

"How comes it you are here, Nelly? Get back to your bed, girl, or you'll catch a terrible cold."

"No, no, Jack; I'm well shawled and muffled. I wanted to say good-bye once more. Tell me what it was you were saying about weakness and folly."

"I was assuring myself that my reluctance to go away was nothing less than folly. I was trying to persuade myself that the best thing I could do was to be off; but I won't say I succeeded."

"But it is, Jack; rely on it, it is. You are doing the right thing; and if I say so, it is with a heavy heart, for I shall be very lonely after you."

Passing his arm around her waist, he walked with her up and down the great spacious hall, their slow footsteps echoing in the silent house.

"If my last meeting with her had not been such as it was, Nelly," said he, falteringly; "if we had not parted in anger, I think I could go with a lighter heart."

"But don't you know Julia well enough to know that these little storms of temper pass away so rapidly that they never leave a trace behind them? She was angry, not because you found fault with her, but because she thought you had suffered yourself to be persuaded she was in the wrong."

"What do I care for these subtleties? She ought to have known that when a man loves a girl as I love her, he has a right to tell her frankly if there's anything in her manner he is dissatisfied with."

"He has no such right; and if he had, he ought to be very careful how he exercised it."

"And why so?"

"Just because fault-finding is not love-making."

"So that, no matter what he saw that he disliked or disapproved of, he ought to bear it all rather than risk the chance of his remonstrance being ill-taken?"

"Not that, Jack; but he ought to take time and opportunity to make the same remonstrance. You don't go down to the girl you are in love with, and call her to account as you would summon a dockyard man or a rigger for something that was wrong with your frigate."

"Take an illustration from something you know better, Nelly, for I'd do nothing of the kind; but if I saw what, in the conduct or even in the manner of the girl I was in love with, I wouldn't stand if she were my wife, it will be hard to convince me that I oughtn't to tell her of it."

"As I said before, Jack, the telling is a matter of time and opportunity."

Of all the jealousies in the world there is none as inconsiderate as that of lovers towards the outer world. Whatever change either may wish for in the other must never come suggested from without."

"And didn't I tell her she was wrong in supposing that it was Marion made me see her coquetry?"

"That you thought Marion had no influence over your judgment she might believe readily enough, but girls have a keener insight into each other than you are aware of, and she was annoyed—and she was right to be annoyed—that in your estimate of her there should enter anything, the very smallest, that could bespeak the sort of impression a woman might have conveyed."

"Nelly, all this is too deep for me. If Julia cared for me as I believed she had, she'd have taken what I said in good part. Didn't I give up smoking of a morning, except one solitary cheroot after breakfast, when she asked me? Who ever saw me take a nip of brandy of a forenoon since that day she cried out, 'Shame, Jack, don't do that?' And do you think I wasn't as fond of my weed and my glass of schnaps as ever she was of all those little airs and graces she puts on to make fools of men?"

"Carriage waiting, sir," said a servant, entering with a mass of cloaks and rugs on his arm.

"Confound the carriage and the journey too," muttered he below his breath. "Look here, Nelly, if you are right, and I hope with all my heart you are, I'll not go."

"That would be ruin, Jack; you must go."

"What do I care for the service? A good seaman—a fellow that knows how to handle a ship—need never want for employment. I'd just as soon be a skipper as wear a pair of swabs on my shoulders and be sworn at by some crusty old rear-admiral for a stain on my quarter-deck. I'll not go, Nelly; tell Ned to take off the trunks; I'll stay where I am."

"Oh, Jack, I implore you not to wreck your whole fortune in life. It is just because Julia loves you that you are bound to show yourself worthy of her. You know how lucky you were to get this chance. You said only yesterday it was the finest station in the whole world. Don't lose it, like a dear fellow,—don't do what will be the embitterment of your entire life, the loss of your rank, and—the——" She stopped as she was about to add something still stronger.

"I'll go then, Nelly; don't cry about it; if you sob that way I'll make a fool of myself. Pretty sight for the flunkies, to see a sailor crying, wouldn't it? all because he had to join his ship. I'll go then at once. I suppose you'll see her to-day, or to-morrow at farthest?"

"I'm not sure, Jack. Marion said something about hunting parsons, I believe, which gave George such deep pain that he wouldn't come here on Wednesday. Julia appears to be more annoyed than George, and in fact for the moment we have quarantined each other."

"Isn't this too bad?" cried he passionately.

"Of course it is too bad; but it's only a passing cloud; and by the time I shall write to you it will have passed away."

Jack clasped her affectionately in his arms, kissed her twice, and sprang into the carriage, and drove away with a full heart indeed; but also with the fast assurance that his dear sister would watch over his interests, and not forget him.

That dark drive went over like a hideous dream. He heard the wind and the rain, the tramp of the horses' feet and the splash of the wheels along the miry road, but he never fully realized where he was or how he came there. The first bell was ringing as he drove into the station, and there was but little time to get down his luggage and secure his ticket. He asked for a coupé, that he might be alone; and being known as one of the great family at Castello, the obsequious station-master hastened to instal him at once. On opening the door, however, it was discovered that another traveller had already deposited a great coat and a rug in one corner.

"Give yourself no trouble, Captain Bramleigh," said the official in a low voice. "I'll just say the coupé is reserved, and we'll put him into another compartment. Take these traps, Bob," cried he to a porter, "and put them into a first-class."

Scarcely was the order given when two figures, moving out of the dark, approached, and one, with a slightly foreign accent, but in admirable English, said, "What are you doing there? I have taken that place."

"Yes," cried his friend, "this gentleman secured the coupé on the moment of his arrival."

"Very sorry, sir—extremely sorry; but the coupé was reserved—specially reserved."

"My friend has paid for that place," said the last speaker; "and I can only say, if I were he, I'd not relinquish it."

"Don't bother yourself about it," whispered Jack. "Let him have his place. I'll take the other corner; and there's an end of it."

"If you'll allow me, Captain Bramleigh," said the official, who was now touched to the quick on that sore point, a question of his department; "if you'll allow me, I think I can soon settle this matter."

"But I will not allow you, sir," said Jack, his sense of fairness already outraged by the whole procedure. "He has as good a right to his place as I have to mine. Many thanks for your trouble. Good-by." And so saying he stepped in.

The foreigner still lingered in earnest converse with his friend, and only mounted the steps as the train began to move. "A bientôt, cher Philippe," he cried, as the door was slammed, and the next instant they were gone.

The little incident which had preceded their departure had certainly not conduced to any amicable disposition between them, and each, after a sidelong glance at the other, ensconced himself more completely within his wrappings, and gave himself up to either silence or sleep.

Some thirty miles of the journey had rolled over, and it was now day,—dark and dreary indeed,—when Jack awoke and found the carriage pretty thick with smoke. There is a sort of freemasonry in the men of tobacco, which never fails them, and they have a kind of instinctive guess of a stranger from the mere character of his weed. On the present occasion Jack recognized a most exquisite Havanna odour, and turned furtively to see the smoker.

"I ought to have asked," said the stranger, "if this was disagreeable to you, but you were asleep, and I did not like to disturb you."

"Not in the least, I am a smoker too," said Jack, as he drew forth his case and proceeded to strike a light.

"Might I offer you one of mine?—they are not bad," said the other, proffering his case.

"Thanks," said Jack; "my tastes are too vulgar for Cubans. Birds-eye, dashed with strong Cavendish, is what I like."

"I have tried that too, as I have tried everything English, but the same sort of half success follows me through all."

"If your knowledge of the language be the measure, I'd say you've not much to complain of. I almost doubt whether you are a foreigner."

"I was born in Italy," said the other cautiously, "and never in England till a few weeks ago."

"I'm afraid," said Jack, with a smile, "I did not impress you very favourably as regards British politeness, when we met this morning; but I was a little out of spirits. I was leaving home, not very likely to see it again for some time, and I wanted to be alone."

"I am greatly grieved not to have known this. I should never have thought of intruding."

"But there was no question of intruding. It was your right that you asserted, and no more."

"Half the harsh things that we see in life are done merely by asserting a right," said the other in a deep and serious voice.

Jack had little taste for what took the form of a reflection: to his apprehension, it was own brother of a sermon; and warned by this sample of his companion's humour, he muttered a broken sort of assent and was silent. Little passed between them till they met at the dinner-table, and then they only interchanged a few commonplace remarks. On their reaching their destination, they took leave of each other courteously, but half formally, and drove off their several ways.

Almost the first man, however, that Jack met, as he stepped on board the mail-packet for Holyhead, was his fellow-traveller of the rail. This time they met cordially, and after a few words of greeting they proceeded to walk the deck together like old acquaintances.

Though the night was fresh and sharp there was a bright moon, and they both felt reluctant to go below, where a vast crowd of passengers was assembled. The brisk exercise, the invigorating air, and a certain congeniality that each discovered in the other, soon established between them

one of those confidences which are only possible in early life. Nor do I know anything better in youth than the frank readiness with which such friendships are made. It is with no spirit of calculation,—it is with no counting of the cost, that we sign these contracts. We feel drawn into companionship, half by some void within ourselves, half by some quality that seems to supply that void. The tones of our own voice in our own ears assure us that we have found sympathy; for we feel that we are speaking in a way we could not speak to cold or uncongenial listeners.

When Jack Bramleigh had told that he was going to take command of a small gun-boat in the Mediterranean, he could not help going further, and telling with what a heavy heart he was going to assume his command. "We sailors have a hard lot of it," said he; "we come home after a cruise,—all is new, brilliant, and attractive to us. Our hearts are not steeled, as are landsmen's, by daily habit. We are intoxicated by what calmer heads scarcely feel excited. We fall in love; and then, some fine day, comes an Admiralty despatch ordering us to hunt slavers off Lagos, or fish for a lost cable in Behring's Straits."

"Never mind," said the other, "so long as there's a goal to reach, so long as there's a prize to win, all can be borne. It's only when life is a shoreless ocean,—when, seek where you will, no land will come in sight,—when, in fact, existence offers nothing to speculate on,—then, indeed, the world is a dreary blank."

"I don't suppose any fellow's lot is as bad as that."

"Not perhaps completely, thoroughly so; but that a man's fate can approach such a condition,—that a man can cling to so small a hope that he is obliged to own to himself that it is next to no hope at all;—that there could be, and is, such a lot in existence, I who speak to you now am able unfortunately to vouch for."

"I am sorry to hear it," said Jack, feelingly; "and I am sorry, besides, to have obtruded my own small griefs before one who has such a heavy affliction."

"Remember," said the Frenchman, "I never said it was all up with me. I have a plank still to cling to, though it be only a plank. My case is simply this: I have come over to this country to prefer a claim to a large property, and I have nothing to sustain it but my right. I know well you Englishmen have a theory that your laws are so admirably and so purely administered that if a man asks for justice,—be he poor, or unknown, or a foreigner, it matters not,—he is sure to obtain it. I like the theory, and I respect the man who believes in it, but I don't trust it myself. I remember reading in your debates how the House of Lords sat for days over a claim of a French nobleman who had been ruined by the great Revolution in France, and for whose aid, with others, a large sum had once been voted, of which, through a series of misadventures, not a shilling had reached him. That man's claim, upheld and maintained by one of the first men in England, and with an eloquence that thrilled through every heart around, was rejected, ay, rejected, and he was sent out of court

a beggar. They couldn't call him impostor, but they left him to starve!" He paused for a second, and in a slower voice continued, "Now it may be that my case shall one of these days be heard before that tribunal, and I ask you does it not call for great courage and great trustfulness to have a hope on the issue?"

"I'll stake my head on it, they'll deal fairly by you," said Jack, stoutly.

"The poor baron I spoke of had powerful friends. Men who liked him well, and fairly believed in his claim. Now I am utterly unknown, and as devoid of friends as of money. I think nineteen out of twenty Englishmen would call me an adventurer to-morrow; and there are few titles that convey less respect in this grand country of yours."

"There you are right; every one here must have a place in society, and be in it."

"My landlady where I lodged thought me an adventurer; the tailor who measured me whispered adventurer as he went downstairs, and when a cabman, in gratitude for an extra sixpence, called me 'count,' it was to proclaim me an adventurer to all who heard him."

"You are scarcely fair to us," said Jack, laughing. "You have been singularly unlucky in your English acquaintance."

"No. I have met a great deal of kindness, but always after a certain interval of doubt—almost of mistrust. I tell you frankly, you are the very first Englishman with whom I have ventured to talk freely on so slight an acquaintance, and it has been to me an unspeakable relief to do it."

"I am proud to think you had that confidence in me."

"You yourself suggested it. You began to tell me of your plans and hopes, and I could not resist the temptation to follow you. A French hussar is about as outspoken an animal as an English sailor, so that we were well met."

"Are you still in the service?"

"No; I am in what we call *disponibilité*. I am free till called on,—and free then if I feel unwilling to go back."

The Frenchman now passed on to speak of his life as a soldier,—a career so full of strange adventures and curious incidents that Jack was actually grieved when they glided into the harbour of Holyhead, and the steamer's bell broke up the narrative.

Witch-Murders in India.

THE belief in witchcraft, which in days of yore was so wide-spread throughout almost all the countries of Europe, seems to a great extent to have been driven back by the ever-advancing tide of education and civilization, until it has a refuge only in the less advanced kingdoms of the East. It is strange to look back on that old superstition of the darker ages, which led our pious forefathers to burn harmless old women, and count it a righteous deed so to do. And it is equally strange to reflect on that same dreary superstition which, even in this nineteenth century, remains so deeply rooted in the minds of multitudes of the inhabitants of India, and which leads now, as it led formerly in Europe, to crimes of torture and bloodshed. But it is to be observed that there is this difference between the witchcraft which was held to exist in England and that which is believed to be practised in the present day in India, that whereas in the former case the Devil appeared to enter in and possess the souls of divers old women, and of some young women also, and by his unhallowed arts endue them with a strange power, and stranger inclination, to perform various acts of petty malice and malignant and spiteful harm towards their neighbours, without cause and with no fixed design : in India, on the other hand, there seems to be a method in the madness, for the results of the supposed witchcraft are palpable and direct, and the harm it works is incalculable. The witch there has a fixed object in view, and spares no pains to its furtherance ; she has something more than the mere indulgence of her own malice to bring about,—a more monstrous design in view than that of mere revenge. This idea of witchcraft is more or less prevalent all over the continent of India ; but it is only in certain parts of the country that it seems to pass beyond mere passive belief, and to assume its most revolting features. And it is of one of these hotbeds of superstition and ignorance that the present article principally treats.

There is a tract of country, some hundreds of miles in length and many more in breadth, which stretches away from the great backbone of Central India down to the shores of the Bay of Bengal : a territory wild and savage to a degree, possessing few roads, other than the mere stony, rugged tracks which for centuries have been the only means of communication between the coast and the interior ; a country whose rivers are not bridged, are not navigable, and, for months of each year, are impassable :—which is clothed on all sides by dense, almost primeval jungle, so dense that in many parts it is a difficult thing for its denizens themselves to force their way through the thick undergrowth and the closely-planted

trees. Its population is but scanty, considering the vast area of the country; and the villages, scattered here and there in the little openings of the jungle, are small, miserably poor, and about as wretched specimens of the habitations of man as can well be supposed. And this country is, moreover, girt about and traversed by great chains of hills, in which dwell races of people as ignorant, as superstitious, and as poor, though even more savage and bloodthirsty, than their brethren of the plains. And all these people are mere animals in their ways of life; beyond the mere gratification of their appetites, they possess scarcely an idea: their religion, if they have any, is vague and gloomy,—a religion of fear and blood. But then they know nothing better, for, century after century, they have lived and died in their remote wilderness, and it is only now that the first rays of light are beginning to shine in upon the thick darkness which has so long hung like a heavy cloud over the length and breadth of the land. So it happens that superstition has established her head-quarters in this country, and has thrown out such hideous offshoots as sometimes to appal her very votaries themselves. Of course, in such an atmosphere as this a belief in all the horrors of witchcraft reigns paramount; it is an established article of faith, and leads the way to outrages and atrocities which have rendered the district notorious in other parts of India, as one inhabited by witches and devils. It is a fact, that to this day the lower classes of other provinces entertain the greatest fear of even passing through this region, lest they should in some mysterious way be tainted by the malignant influence supposed to be abroad. And it is a subject of congratulation that they find themselves and their goods fairly out of this ill-omened district.

The approximate cause of this prevailing belief in the power of witchcraft is "cholera," that scourge of Hindustan. This pestilence, which for years has puzzled the wisest of European physicians, whose source is yet a mystery, and for which, despite all that science can do, no real remedy has yet been found, is attributed, very much as we in former times should have attributed any such inscrutable plague, to simple witchcraft. The people themselves know nothing of excess of, or diminution of, ozone, have no knowledge of sanitary laws, are ignorant of the many ingenious theories from time to time brought forward to show that cholera is caused by some subtle atmospheric poison, or some vegetable impurity. Failing to find a natural cause, they adopt a supernatural one, and lay it all to the account of the spirit of evil.

It is usually at the commencement of the hot season that cholera appears here and there among the villages, at first of a milder type, more sporadic than epidemic, showing itself first at one little village, then another, moving sometimes in a direct line across the country, sometimes fitfully coming and going, breaking out where least expected, and passing over places which would seem most to favour its attacks. As the heat increases, the disease acquires greater virulence, grows more sudden in its results, until at last it commences those ravages which decimate towns

and villages, and strikes panic into the souls of the people. Driven to desperation, they in many cases leave their homes, and take refuge in the jungles, carrying the taint of disease with them, and leaving a track of dead and dying behind them as they fly. The very fact of their having, during the period of their banishment, to subsist as well as they can on the fruits and even on the leaves of the jungle trees, and to drink the most polluted water, renders them easy victims to disease. In such times it is no uncommon thing to find whole towns deserted, with the dead lying unburied in the houses, in the ditches and streets. By the roadside, and in the depths of the jungle fastnesses, the dead lie, infecting the air for miles round. If, in their great need and distress, the fugitives approach any other village in hope of obtaining shelter and food, they are driven away with blows and curses, and must go back into the jungles to die. The little traffic carried on in better times is entirely suspended; roads are unfrequented,—death is on all sides. Numbers take to their beds and die from sheer fright on the first approach of the destroyer. It happens, moreover, most unfortunately, that at this season of the year great gatherings of the people are held at certain sacred spots, as on the banks of a sacred river, or near some holy well, or in the neighbourhood of some deeply-venerated temple. The people flock to these great gatherings or fairs from all quarters, and remain for days and weeks together, buying, selling, and performing their religious duties; and seldom does a year pass but that at one of these fairs, perhaps at all, in the very height of their enjoyment, the alarm is given that cholera has appeared. The scene that follows such an appalling announcement may be in some sort imagined from the following account of a case in point, quoted in one of the official returns only a short time since.

The report states that a vast multitude of men, women, and children were gathered together at some sacred spot, situate high up on a lofty range of hills; some springs of pure sweet water sprang from the rocks, and ran down in cool refreshing streams to the plains below; the air was pure and exhilarating, the scenery superb, and the people washed in the sacred springs, bought and sold, and worshipped their gods, without a thought of the calamity hanging over them. People of many castes and of many districts were there, who had brought with them large quantities of merchandise of all kinds; they had come with their wives and children, their servants, their tents, their elephants, camels, horses, and bullocks, hoping to combine a profitable business with their religious duties. Between business and pleasure the days passed quickly away, and it began to be almost time to think of betaking themselves back to their respective villages, when on a sudden cholera of a frightfully virulent type broke out in the very heart of the camp. Universal panic ensued, each man thought only of how to save his own life, regardless of his neighbour. Then began a great rush for the plains. Leaving their goods behind them, with one accord they crowded down the steep ghats, to get away from the fatal spot as soon as possible. But the destroyer followed them—indeed it

accompanied them ; for long before they had reached the foot of the mountains, the path down which they had rushed was covered with dead and dying, who were actually, as the report describes it, piled up in heaps among the rocks and stones of the ghaut. Once down on the plains the vast multitude spread in all directions, all anxious to avoid contact with their fellows. And as there was scarcely a family, of all those who came down from the mountains, of which one member had not died, or of which one at least, sick with cholera, was not being carried away with them, so the disease was carried about to all points of the compass. At last the people in their panic abandoned their sick and dying relatives, leaving them to die under the trees or in the nullahs, and fled in every direction exhausted for want of food. If any of them dared to go near any village which stood on their route, the villagers armed themselves with clubs and stones, and threatened vengeance if they came nearer. And so vast numbers died, some of cholera, some of hunger, some of fear and exhaustion ; and the unburied bodies polluted the atmosphere and ended in spreading the epidemic far and near.

It has been supposed that the great assemblies of people from every part of India at Juggernaut and other such sacred spots induces these outbreaks of cholera, and that the pilgrims on their return journey carry the seeds of the disease with them. There is no doubt truth in this ; but cholera, as before remarked, seems to obey no laws, and sets at nought all the precautions which human skill can devise. It may consequently be imagined how intense a dread the people have of an outbreak of cholera ; and seeing how unsparing a scourge it is, it may not be unnatural that they should believe witchcraft to be at the bottom of it. Their theory of witchcraft is simple and horrible. They imagine that there exists a certain "Devi," a demon of most blood-thirsty propensities, who possesses an insatiable craving for human flesh. In order to appease this appetite he selects from any village he thinks will suit him one or more women—old or young, he is not particular—and enlists them in his service ; he endows them with supernatural powers, with that of the evil eye, and enables them at will to produce cholera. In consideration of the powers bestowed on them, the witches are under an engagement to kill off as many people by cholera for the demon's especial eating as he shall think sufficient. The witch herself is supposed to partake, and may sometimes be discovered drinking, the life-blood of her own relatives. Sometimes men are also said to be enlisted in this diabolical cause ; but the demon on the whole seems to prefer the women, as being more easy to deal with. The consequences of branding any one as a witch are, of course, more onerous ; and while such a state of things lasts, it may easily be conceived how readily any malicious person may revenge himself on his neighbours. No sooner does the first case of cholera appear in the village than the men hold a counsel, at which the head of the village presides, to determine on what is best to be done. It is,

perhaps, decided that the village divinity must be propitiated. So a procession sets out, with as much noise of tom-toms, conchs, and other barbarous music as can be made, to the place where the god has his abode,—usually immediately beyond the precincts of the village, under some large banyan or peepul tree. After much music has been perpetrated, garlands of yellow flowers are hung round the neck of the deity, libations of water are poured over him, and he is plentifully anointed with red ochre. More flowers are scattered over him and around him; offerings of fruit piled on large plaintain-leaves are deposited near him, together with several earthen jars of water; and if necessity demands and the means of the community admit of it, some large sacrifice, as a sheep or goat, is made. The procession then marches through the village with horrid noise of tom-tom, and what is commonly called the cholera horn, and the people disperse to await the result of their propitiatory offerings. When some time has elapsed, and the cholera, instead of decreasing, as it obviously should have done had the god been well-disposed towards his people, appears to increase in violence and to grow daily more formidable in its attacks, the inhabitants get panic-stricken, and giving up appeals to the clemency of their god as hopeless, agree among themselves that witchcraft must be at work. Under these circumstances it seems advisable, that before they are driven to leave their homes and take to the jungles, the witch or witches should be discovered and punished. Another secret council is held, winked at perhaps by the two men in authority in the village, the head-man and his kotwal, whose duty it clearly should be on the part of Government to interfere and put a stop to any such proceedings. It is now solemnly announced that witchcraft is abroad, and that the witches must be punished. It is determined to watch the women very carefully, more especially at those times when they go down to the wells, or the stream, or the tank, as the case may be, to draw water for their households; for it is then that the demon will no doubt have most influence over them, and who knows but that they may be induced to poison the water to bring about their dreadful ends? The women must be kept under careful scrutiny, and should anything appear suspicious in their conduct they must be confined altogether to their houses.

At length, either from a spirit of malice, a desire for revenge, or simply for the sake of obtaining a victim, it is whispered about the village that the wife and daughter perhaps of some villager are the culprits, that they are in daily intercourse with the demon, and for his benefit are spreading abroad the dreaded cholera; it may even be asserted of them that they have been seen to drink the blood of their victims. It may chance that the innocent objects of all this popular indignation are sitting quietly in their hut about the time—as the expressive native idiom has it —“of lamp-lighting.” They have been, perhaps, hard at work all day, and are preparing the scanty evening meal of rice and dhal, or cakes of coarse flour, for the husband and father not yet returned from his labour

in the fields. Suddenly a gang of men, savage and desperate-looking, enter the hovel, and drag away the two women, heedless of their cries and vehement declarations of innocence. They have no need, poor creatures, to ask what the reason of this sudden visit may be; they know full well that it is a question of witchcraft, and perhaps one of violent death to them. When the master of the house returns, he finds his hut empty, and he immediately guesses the cause. He may, perhaps, attempt to remonstrate with the infuriate mob, but he is soon silenced, for he knows that to show too great an interest in the fate of his wife or his daughter may suffice to implicate him also in the charge of dealings with the devil. He rarely, therefore, interferes, whatever may be his feelings in the matter; and indeed it is not impossible that he himself, only one year ago, had a hand in some such dealings in which his neighbour's family were concerned. The two women have in the meantime been dragged out of the village and taken to some large tree near at hand, where preparations are being made for their torture. The principal and favourite instrument of punishment is a rod of the castor-oil tree; for tradition says that this alone has any power of hurting a witch, all other woods, even the potent bamboo itself, being useless for the purpose. Indeed, it is said that if a witch be beaten with a stick cut from any other than the castor-oil tree, it will on the very first application break in pieces, however stout and strong it may seem. So on this occasion castor-oil rods are in great request, and most of the assembled crowd appear armed with one or more of them.

The modes of torture usually adopted for witches vary somewhat according to the particular province and district in which they are employed. In former days, under the beneficent rule of the rajahs, when no one, from the rajah to the ryot, had any fear of gods or men before his eyes, and when atrocities of all kinds were the rule rather than the exception, it was the custom to tie up witches in skins, and throw them alive into the water. Sometimes, by way of a little gentle torture, they were crammed into a small chamber full of cobras, where they first half died of fright, and then quite died of snake-bites. Now-a-days, however, the first thing to be done in all such cases is a flogging with castor-oil rods. The women are in the first instance reasoned with and told that denial is useless: of course they are witches, have dealings with the demon, and have in short, together with him, drunk the blood and eaten the flesh of numbers of the departed villagers. The women naturally deny the charge vehemently. They are forthwith disrobed and hung, very often head downwards, on to a horizontal bamboo, placed some ten or twelve feet from the ground, on two perpendicular ones planted firmly in the earth. They are then swung slowly backwards and forwards, while their neighbours, armed with their castor-oil rods, stand in rows on either side, and give each a blow as she swings past: and the castor-oil rod is, in willing hands, capable of inflicting very severe punishment.

When the victims are half dead from the beating and from suffocation, they are taken down and dragged off to some neighbouring hovel while further tortures are being prepared. At this stage of the proceedings, perhaps, some more experienced or long-headed member of the company hints that the Sirkar (*i. e.* Government) may object to their arrangements; for the Sirkar, it is well known, *does* (though it is very unaccountable) object to people being punished and put to death, unless for proven offences and by competent authority. He, however, is silenced by the remark that if the Sirkar catches them, why then they must be caught: in the meantime, is their blood to be drunk and their village destroyed by witches? Some one else then suggests that burning with hot irons is a good way of making witches confess. So fires are lighted and pieces of old iron put in to be heated, and when all is ready the unfortunate victims are again brought out, and are oftentimes very cruelly and brutally burned on their necks and heads with the red-hot irons. Another mode of torture is to cover the face and neck with cotton-wool and then set fire to it, or to heat a brass candlestick to a white heat and compel the accused to carry it about until the hand is nearly burnt off. Another plan is to hang the witch from the bamboo above mentioned by the arms, to attach heavy weights to the feet, and to dash them about until the joints are ready to give way. The wretched creatures are kept all this time without food, water, or sleep, and are beaten during the intervals of other punishments with the all-powerful castor-oil rod. In their agony the victims very often declare that they really have a compact with a demon, and disclose horrible particulars as to the banquets they share with him. At last it happens that one or perhaps both of the women die under the cruel treatment they have received, and then the assembly is struck with a guilty fear. The bodies must be buried or got rid of in some way or other, and that is a very difficult thing to accomplish. No one who has any respect for his caste or himself will stretch out a hand to bury a witch—it would be endless pollution to think of it. The affair must be kept quiet, however; there must be no delay, for if it *does* come to the ears of the Sirkar, it will go hard with the murderers. So a couple of men of the lowest caste to be found in the village are induced by threats and bribes to drag away the bodies and throw them into some neighbouring ditch, or into a nullah, or a tank even, of which the water is little used, and so the tragedy ends—for a time at least. The murderers are then all sworn to secrecy, and go to their homes, hoping that cholera at any rate after this night's work will disappear. When matters are not carried quite so far as this, they content themselves with beating the supposed witches and turning them and their families out into the jungles, forbidding them ever again to approach the village: to prevent their doing so, they pull down their huts. The outcasts wander into the jungles and die very soon of starvation or cholera.

It now probably becomes necessary to make a general exodus from

the plague-stricken village. Though the witches have been murdered the plague is not stayed ; therefore, as before described, the survivors gather together what goods they can conveniently carry, and leaving most of their old and helpless relations to perish of hunger and disease, betake themselves to the jungles. When the rainy season has commenced, the great heats passed away, and the cholera to some extent has abated, those who have managed to keep themselves alive come back to their homes and their occupations. And it is just at this time that, by some means or other, the news of the witch-murder *does* get to the ears of the Sirkar ; a quarrel ensues most likely between some of the culprits, or one or more find a guilty conscience too much for them, and so walk in and make a clean breast of it to the nearest authorities. Oftener, however, the relations of the deceased, who have been probably bribed to silence, strike for more money, and in default thereof go and lodge a complaint against the murderers. Owing to the zeal of the civil authorities, the people are beginning to understand that they must not call people witches and put them to cruel deaths ; because to do so is murder : a fact which they found difficult at first to grasp. The means employed, however, to convince them of this great truth, have been summary, and consequently, successful. The ringleaders and instigators of the crime have been arrested, found guilty, and hanged on the very spot where, in many instances, but some few months previously their victims had suffered and died a horrible death.

There is a strange, wild story of witchcraft and its results, well known among the people of the district here alluded to, and which will perhaps form an appropriate conclusion to this narrative. It is as follows :—A great many years ago,—so many, that it was beyond the memory of even the oldest inhabitant's great grandfather, so long ago that perhaps in those days many of the ruined temples to be seen perched on hill-tops and enconced picturesquely among the palm-trees on the banks of the lotus-covered tanks or lakes, were in the very climax of their prosperity, and the gods enshrined therein were well fed, and had plenty of music and flowers on feast days,—there was a small village, situated on the bank of some such large tank, inhabited by industrious basket-makers. It was small and remote, and the inhabitants had a very singular horror of meeting or intermixing with the people of other neighbouring towns, for they had strong faith in the power of the evil eye. At last a report reached them of a certain dreadful plague which was ravaging the surrounding villages, carrying off the population by hundreds. Witchcraft, of course, was at the bottom of it all. It happened on a certain fine evening, towards the commencement of the hot season, that a basket-maker and his wife were sitting at the door of their hut, busily engaged at their trade, and their son, a boy of some six years old, was playing about under a large peepul-tree, some hundred yards off. Presently a woman was seen to pass through the village, and strike into a path which led immediately under the peepul-tree. Always suspicious

of strangers, the mother, crying out to her husband that the stranger was surely a witch, ran to pick up her child; the woman heard the exclamation, and turning, looked for an instant at the child, and then went her way through the jungle. In two hours from that moment the child was dead. The witch, said the distressed parents, had killed it with a glance. It must be buried at once; but they both agreed that the witch, though she had killed, should not devour their poor little one. So it was buried under a great mango-tree, a short distance from the house; and it being a very dark night, the father and mother climbed into the tree, and determined to watch over the grave until the witch should come. Slowly the hours passed. At midnight they distinguished, among the faint night-sounds peculiar to a thick jungle, footsteps approaching; it was verily the witch. She came cautiously to the grave, and muttering her incantations, dug up the body, which she placed in a sitting posture against the trunk of the tree; she then lit a fire, and after performing certain devilish charms, seized the corpse in her arms, and executed a horrible dance round the fire with it. Life at that moment seemed to re-enter the body; it stood up of itself, and began moving solemnly round the fire. The witch was preparing to end the scene, when on a sudden the father and mother sprang to the ground, seized their son, dashed out the embers of the fire, and fled to the village, leaving the witch in a state of astonishment; and the strangest part of the story is that the child live^d, grew up, learnt his father's trade, became the father himself of a numerous family, and lived happily ever after.

There is much nonsense talked about the injustice of taking Native provinces under British rule; but it may be argued that if the result of such usurpation is to be the clearing away of this dark cloud of ignorance and superstition from the minds of the people, and substituting for it a clearer and brighter light—then the wider British rule extends the better and happier for India.

The Beautiful Miss Gunnings.

It is curious with what frequency Irish names turn up in the memoirs of the last century. Whether it be the Speaker of the Irish House of Commons betting at Newmarket, Lord Barrymore's private theatricals, or St. Leger's extravagant dinners—in every direction the Irish appear conspicuous.

It was in fortune-hunting, however, that they seem to have been most successful—a pursuit in which they excited considerable jealousy. There was that tall Hibernian, Mr. Hussey, whose stalwart person and handsome face not only won the favour of the widowed Dutches of Manchester, co-heiress of the last Duke of Montagu, and owner in her own right of immense possessions, but procured for him the earldom of Beaulieu and the red riband of the Bath to boot. Sir Charles Hanbury Williams wrote some verses on this occasion, the conclusion of which set half the Irishmen in London examining their pistols. "Nature," said the famous wit,—

Nature, indeed, denies them sense,
But gives them legs and impudence.
That beats all understanding.

Of all the celebrated Irish, or, indeed, English names, in the social history of the eighteenth century, none, however, are so famous as those of the "beautiful Miss Gunnings."

These wild Irish girls burst upon London society in the autumn of 1751, and in a moment carried it by storm. For the next ten years the gossiping writers of the age are incessantly chronicling their appearance, their manners or want of them, their marriages, and the admiration they excited, not only in fashionable circles, but still more among the populace. If it were not that the accounts they give are in most cases those of eye-witnesses, we should hesitate to believe them. Imagine a shoemaker realizing three guineas in one day by the exhibition at a penny a head of one of their shoes! Surely since the time of Cinderella and her glass slipper there has been nothing like it. We doubt if Madame Tussaud would think it worth while adding such a relic to her museum of curiosities at the present day.

Will our readers believe that these girls were unable to walk in the Park on account of the crowd that surrounded them in sheer admiration, and that they were obliged to obtain the protection of a file of the Guards? That when they were travelling through the country crowds lined the roads to gaze at them, and hundreds of people remained up all night around the inn at which they were staying, on the chance of getting a peep at them in the morning? Can we believe such things of our great

grandfathers and mothers, for we are sure the latter were not the least curious? We think we may propound the same question about our ancestors as one of the Bishops did in reference to the French, at the time of the Revolution,—“Can a whole nation lose its senses?” Where is all our enthusiasm at the present day? Has it oozed away through our fingers’ ends in this sceptical age? If “those goddesses the Gunnings” now descended upon us, we warrant that no extraordinary means need be taken for their protection. London, in fact, has become too extended and its population too numerous to have any longer but one centre of attraction. In our opinion, the popular admiration excited by “the beauties” is even more astonishing than their great alliances, splendid as these undoubtedly were.

The elder became Countess of Coventry, and the younger married successively two dukes, refused a third, and was the mother of four, besides obtaining a peerage in her own right. Not bad for two penniless Irish girls! We have called these celebrated beauties “Irish,” and as such they are generally spoken of. Strictly speaking, however, the popular belief is incorrect, inasmuch as there is no doubt they were born at Hemingford Grey in Huntingdonshire, but from thence were removed to the family seat in Roscommon when little more than infants.

The Gunning family was an offshoot of a respectable English house, and had settled in Ireland in the reign of James I. They possessed a fair estate, called Castle Coote, in Roscommon; but it was probably heavily encumbered. In the year 1791, Mr. Gunning, then a student in the Temple, and his father’s heir, married the Hon. Bridget Bourke, daughter of Lord Mayo, and in the two ensuing years were born Maria, afterwards Countess of Coventry, and Elizabeth, the future Duchess of Hamilton. At the time of Mr. Gunning’s marriage his father was still living, and it was not till his death a few years after that the family were transplanted to the wilds of Connaught.

It is hardly possible for us now to realize the desolation of that remote province in the early part of the last century. “To Hell or to Connaught” presented then a much more uncertain alternative than at the present day; and the worst of it was that, once there, escape was nearly as difficult from one place as the other. There were neither roads nor conveyances, and the travellers of the time complain bitterly of the hardships of the journey.

We are sure our readers share our regret that we know so little of Mrs. Gunning. If the lives of the mothers of great men have been thought worthy of record, surely the mothers of fair women deserve a niche in history. That Mrs. Gunning was handsome we take for granted. We are told that she was “a lady of most elegant figure,” a grace her daughters inherited; but we should like to have known much more than this. Bitterly, we imagine, she must have lamented her exile in the far West, especially when she beheld her daughters developing every day new beauties, and yet lacking those graces and accomplishments without

which their charms would lose half their attraction. Occasionally, too, she would hear of the splendour of the Irish capital, where Lord Chesterfield was ruling with unwonted magnificence.

Perhaps, however, the country breeding of the Miss Gunnings in reality contributed to their future triumphs. Their natural and unaffected manners must have contrasted pleasantly with the artificial and ceremonious society of the period, while there is no doubt that the healthy breezes of the country contributed not a little to those brilliant complexions which added so materially to their loveliness.

In the year 1748 Mrs. Gunning resolved that her daughters should no longer "waste their sweetness on the desert air," and accordingly the whole family removed to Dublin; Maria, afterwards Lady Coventry, being then about sixteen, and her sister a year younger.

At that period the society of the Irish metropolis possessed many attractions. Sheridan had succeeded to the theatrical sceptre, and his accession heralded a new era in the Irish drama. The riots and disturbances which had so long disgraced the performances were quelled by his firm government, while the engagements of Garrick, Cibber, Mrs. Woffington, and Miss Bellamy shed a lustre over the Irish stage such as had never before been equalled.

The musical taste, too, for which the Hibernian capital is still famous was even then conspicuous. Some years had elapsed since Handel's visit, but early in 1748 his *Judas Maccabeus* was produced for the first time, by the special command of the Earl of Harrington, then Lord Lieutenant, and met with a much more cordial reception than in London. Lord Harrington had just succeeded the famous Earl of Chesterfield, who had departed the previous year, leaving behind him memories of magnificence and hospitality to which the Irish Court had hitherto been a stranger. Lord Harrington, however, seems to have been determined to prove that the junior branch of the Stanhopes could vie with the parent stem in splendour and elegance. His Court was graced by the presence of his eldest son's bride, Lady Caroline Petersham, daughter of the Duke of Grafton, and one of the handsomest women in England, who thus early entered on her career of rivalry with the beautiful Countess of Coventry. But from this English belle the lovely Mrs. Madden, afterwards Lady Ely and the reigning Irish toast, was considered by many to bear off the palm—perhaps through national prejudice.

Of the brilliant festivities at the Castle of Dublin Mr. Victor, who aided Sheridan in ruling the fierce democracy of an Irish audience, gives us some idea. He tells us that, in virtue of his office, he attended Court on the birthnight (October 30, 1748), and that "nothing in the memory of the oldest courtier living ever equalled the taste and splendour of the supper-room at the Castle on that occasion. The ball was in the new room designed by Lord Chesterfield, which is allowed to be very magnificent. After the dancing was over, the company retired to a long gallery, where, as you passed slowly through, you stopped by the way at shops

elegantly formed, where was cold eating and all sorts of wines and sweetmeats, and the whole most beautifully disposed by transparent paintings, through which a shade was cast like moonlight. Flutes and other soft instruments were playing all the while, but, like the candles, unseen. At each end of the long building were placed fountains of lavender-water constantly playing, that diffused a most grateful odour through this amazing fairy scene, which certainly surpassed everything of the kind in Spenser, as it proved not only a fine feast for the imagination but, after the dream, for the senses also, by the excellent substantials at the sideboards." The tradition is that the Miss Gunnings having no dresses in which to appear at the *fête* thus described, applied to Mr. Sheridan in their difficulty, and that he at once placed his whole theatrical wardrobe at their disposal—a piece of generosity repaid by neglect and ingratitude, when, some years later, they were in a position to make a proper return for it. That the Gunnings were in a state of impecuniosity, deeper even than became the Irish gentry of the period, not only when in Dublin, but afterwards in London, is evident from some anecdotes about them related by Miss Bellamy, who at this time was acting in the Irish capital. One day as Miss Bellamy was returning through the streets from a rehearsal, she heard a voice of distress, and at once entered the house from which it proceeded. She there found "a lady of most elegant figure," surrounded by four beautiful girls and a boy of about three years old. This lady was Mrs. Gunning, who informed the actress that having lived beyond their income, her husband had been compelled to retire into the country to avoid the disagreeable consequences which were about to ensue, leaving his family to the tender mercy of the bailiffs, who were then in the house, and preparing to turn them out of doors. Miss Bellamy, with that kindness which is still the characteristic of her profession, took pity on the family, and brought them to her own residence. The bailiffs, too, were outwitted by the actress's serving-man, who was sent at night to remain under the windows of the house, from which everything portable was thrown to him. While they were thus residing with Miss Bellamy, the Gunnings, conscious of their charms and eager to learn what their effect would be, insisted on consulting a fortune-teller who had then gained great celebrity in Dublin. This female seer, we are informed, told their fortunes with even greater accuracy than the mediums of the present day; foreseeing not only the exalted rank to which both would attain, but also the premature death of the Countess of Coventry.

Of the sensation the youthful beauties created in Dublin we have, unfortunately, but little record. Mrs. Delany, whose charming *Letters* lately edited by Lady Llanover throw such light upon the social history of the past century, gives us just one peep at them in a letter written in June, 1750, to her sister, from her residence at Delville, near Dublin. Her sister had probably written to her, curious to learn about the wonderful Gunnings. In reply, Mrs. Delany informs her that all she has

heard about the Gunnings is true, except about their fortunes; "but," adds the censorious old lady, "they have a still greater want, and that is discretion." It was probably, however, this very want of discretion,—so shocking in the eyes of the precise Mrs. Delany,—which constituted the peculiar charm of the Miss Gunnings, and especially of the elder, afterwards Lady Coventry. Their *naïveté* and the absence of restraint in their manners must have been quite refreshing in that artificial age, in spite of an occasional *bêtise*. The "wits" generally admired (and made fun of) the "wild Irish girls;" and Selwyn especially appears to have had quite a fatherly regard for Lady Coventry, in whose daughter he subsequently showed the deepest interest.

One would have imagined that the society of the Irish metropolis at such a brilliant epoch ought to have sufficed for girls brought up in the retirement to which they had been accustomed. Success there we should have thought would have satisfied even their soaring ambition, especially when their financial weakness is revealed to us. Perhaps, however, these very difficulties only hastened their departure. Whether this surmise be correct, or that our beauties were determined to fulfil the prophecies of the old fortune-teller, or that the pension of 150*l.* a year, which at this period we find granted to Mrs. Gunning out of that mysterious and much-enduring fund "the Irish establishment," supplied afresh the sinews of war, in which the family seem to have been woefully deficient—at all events the future peeresses arrived in the metropolis in the autumn of 1750. Such a journey was then a tedious, if not a perilous undertaking. The traveller might take a week to reach Holyhead, and would certainly take as long again to arrive at his journey's end.

On a Sunday in the December of that year they were presented at Court, as we learn from *Faulkner's Dublin Journal*, and most graciously received. Our readers who have perhaps seen the "exhibits" of their native land hidden from the profane gaze of the foreigner on the Sabbath, will be surprised to learn that the ceremony of presentation at Court took place on that day. It was not till the following reign that the custom of holding drawing-rooms on a Sunday was abandoned.

What a society was that into which the Gunnings plunged! It was a dandified, ceremonious age, full of wicked, conceited, mocking, witty "fine ladies and fine gentlemen." A lord was then a lord indeed, and his superiority over common mortals duly acknowledged. Drinking, card-playing for enormous stakes, and horse-racing, were the chief occupations of the time. Lord March, so well known afterwards when he became Duke of Queensberry as "Old Q.," Selwyn, Lord Carlisle, and Walpole, were then in their prime. The Court and society in general were frightfully dissolute. Assemblies, masked balls, *ridottos*, and the gardens of Vauxhall and Ranelagh, afforded the "young bloods" opportunities of which they were not slow to take advantage. Bath, where the long and brilliant career of Nash was drawing to its close, was still the most fashionable resort. Thither, in the autumn, went their Royal Highnesses the Prince

of Wales and his wife, "cette diablesse," as King George used to call her, and were followed by a glittering crowd.

The Miss Gunnings were not long without creating a sensation even in the great metropolis itself. They were not only sought after by the leaders of fashionable society, but were also surrounded by admiring crowds in the Parks and at all places of public resort. Horace Walpole writing to Sir Horace Mann, in 1751, thus alludes to them :—" You who knew England in other times, will find it difficult to conceive what indifference reigns with regard to Ministers and their squabbles. The two Miss Gunnings are twenty times more the subject of conversation than the two brothers and Lord Granville. These are two Irish girls, of no fortune, who are declared the handsomest women alive. I think their being two, so handsome and both such perfect figures, is their chief excellence, for, singly, I have seen much handsomer women than either: however, they can't walk in the Park, or go to Vauxhall, but such crowds follow them that they are generally driven away." A short time after he wrote,—" As you talk of our beauties, I shall tell you a new story of the Gunnings, who make more noise than any of their predecessors since the days of Helen, though neither of them, nor anything about them, has yet been 'tetrissima belli causa.' They went the other day to see Hampton Court. As they were going into the Beauty Room another company arrived. The housekeeper said, 'This way, ladies; here are the beauties.' The Gunnings flew into a passion, and asked her what she meant; they came to see the palace, and not to be shown as a sight themselves." In spite, however, of these protestations, there was a very general belief that they were not wholly averse to the popular homage.

It was about a year after their arrival in London that the marriage of the eldest Miss Gunning with the Earl of Coventry was first reported. In August, 1751, we find that the editor of *Faulkner's Dublin Journal*, whose readers doubtless were eager for any scrap of news about their former celebrities, is confidently assured "that a treaty of marriage is concluded between the Earl of Coventry and the celebrated Miss Gunning of this city;" and a short time afterwards he informs us that the marriage has actually taken place. This, however, was anticipating matters considerably.

The Earl of Coventry must have been one of the greatest matches in England. He had just come into possession of the title and an ample estate in Worcestershire, of which county he was immediately made lord-lieutenant, succeeding his father in the office. He seems to have been a grave, solemn kind of young man. His favourite pursuit was music, of which he was enthusiastically fond. It was this taste probably that had attracted him to Violetta, afterwards famous as the wife of Garrick, to whom it had been said he was going to be married a couple of years before the period we are speaking of. At the meeting of Parliament, in November, 1751, he moved the address in the Upper House; and Lord Chesterfield tells us he did it well enough, "though agitated at the same time by the

two strong passions of fear and love, Miss Gunning being seated on one side of him and the House on the other." His lordship adds, "That affair is within a few days of its crisis, but whether that will be a marriage or a settlement is undecided. Most people think the latter; for my part I think the former." We learn again from the same source that the pair were carrying on their negotiations in all public places, but that people were in doubt whether the treaty would be final or only *provisional*.

¹² We think there was no foundation for these insinuations against Miss Gunning. Whatever discussions might arise at White's about the relations between the Irish beauty and the English peer, however my Lord March might snigger and Selwyn hint, there never appears to have been anything but an honourable alliance in contemplation between the parties. Lord Chesterfield, as was natural for so keen an observer of the world and its ways, had foreseen the inevitable result, although the crisis was postponed much longer than he had imagined, and then brought about in rather a curious way. Walpole tells us the story in a letter of the end of February, 1762:—" . . . The event that has made most noise since my last is the extempore wedding of the youngest of the two Gunnings (Elizabeth), who have made so vehement a noise. Lord Coventry, a grave young lord of the remains of the patriot breed, has long dangled after the eldest, virtuously with regard to her virtue, not very honourably with regard to his own credit. About six weeks ago the young Duke of Hamilton, the very reverse of the Earl, hot, debauched, extravagant, and equally damaged in his fortune and person, fell in love with the youngest at the masquerade, and determined to marry her in the spring. About a fortnight since, at an assembly at my Lord Chesterfield's made to show the house, which is really magnificent, Duke Hamilton made violent love at one end of the room while he was playing at Pharaoh at the other end; that is, he saw neither the bank nor his own cards, which were up three hundred pounds each. He soon lost a thousand. I own I was so little a professor in love that I thought all this parade looked ill for the poor girl, and could not conceive why, if he was so engaged with his mistress as to disregard such sums, he played at all. However, two nights after, being left alone with her, while her mother and sister were at Bedford House, he found himself so impatient that he sent for a parson. The doctor refused to perform the ceremony without licence or ring. The duke swore he would send for the archbishop. At last they were married with the ring of the bed-curtain, at half an hour after twelve at night, at May-fair Chapel. The Scotch are indignant that so much beauty had its effect; and, what is most silly, my Lord Coventry declares that now he will marry the other."

This impatient duke, who was thus seized with such a sudden passion for the younger Miss Gunning, was the grandson of the unfortunate nobleman who when on the eve of setting out as ambassador to France in 1712 was slain in a duel by Lord Mohun. This was not the first time that he had fallen suddenly and violently in love. The fascina-

tions of Miss Chudleigh, whose trial for bigamy when Duchess of Kingston is well known, had previously overcome him. The Duke proposed for her, and was accepted. He afterwards left for the Continent, leaving her behind him as his affianced bride. During his absence abroad Miss Chudleigh met Mr. Hervey, afterwards Earl of Bristol, and was married to him, but their union concealed. It was said that she would not have abandoned her first lover had not her aunt, through the interception of their correspondence, led her to believe that she had been deserted by him. His Grace felt the disappointment keenly, and for some time after led such a wild life as justified the comments of Walpole. He was determined, evidently, that the second time, at least, there should be no "slip between the cup and the lip." Owner of three dukedoms in Scotland, England, and France, besides other dignities innumerable, this nobleman was probably the haughtiest man in the kingdom, now that "the proud Duke of Somerset" had passed away. The duke and his duchess used to walk into dinner before their guests, eat off the same plate, and drink to nobody under the rank of an earl. Naturally enough, Walpole wonders how they could get any one, either above or below their own rank, to dine with them. Yet the duke was not without brains and culture, for Dr. Carlyle mentions him as having spoken at the Select Society in Edinburgh, and says that he was "a man of letters could he have kept himself sober."

The marriage of the elder Miss Gunning soon followed that of her sister, and early in March she became Countess of Coventry. An anecdote told by Miss Bellamy, while it does not say much for the gratitude of her ladyship, shows that in London as in Dublin the beauties were sometimes reduced to considerable straits. One night when Miss Bellamy was acting in *Romeo and Juliet* and had just reached one of the most pathetic passages in that tragedy she was disturbed by a loud laugh, which, it turned out, proceeded from Lady Coventry, the occupant of the stage box. The actress was so much upset by the interruption that she was compelled to retire. When the countess was remonstrated with she excused herself by saying that since she had seen Mrs. Cibber act the part she could not endure Miss Bellamy. It is probable that her ladyship would have spared this retort had she remembered certain pecuniary obligations between her and the actress which were still undischarged. The next day Miss Bellamy, stung by her conduct, requested payment of the note of hand which the countess had given her when obtaining a loan just previous to her marriage; probably to purchase the wedding trousseau. The application was treated with contempt, and the debt never paid. The giving of that business-like "note of hand" appears to us, we confess, rather suspicious; it looks as if it was not the first transaction of the kind in which her ladyship had been engaged. She had, we suppose, the ideas of her countryman on the subject, who, having given a short-dated bill for a debt, expressed his pleasure that that matter was settled at all events. In spite, however, of Miss Bellamy's assistance, the countess does not appear to

have brought a very ample trousseau to her husband. Lord Chesterfield, alluding to Lady Coventry's presence at a Chapel of the Garter held a few days after her marriage, insinuates as much when he tells us, in complimenting her beauty, that "my lord has adorned and rigged her out completely. She adorns herself too much, for I was near enough to see manifestly that she had laid on a great deal of white, which she did not want, and which would destroy both her natural complexion and her teeth. Duchess Hamilton, her sister, is to appear next week, and will in my mind far outshine her." When the duchess was presented a few days later the curiosity and excitement were so great that the highest ladies in the land climbed upon chairs and tables to look at her; and at the opera and every public place where it was known either of the sisters would attend crowds assembled to catch a glimpse of them.

In May their ladyships proceeded to their several castles; but Lady Coventry at least does not seem to have fancied country life; and indeed, considering that she was then in the zenith of her popularity, such a dislike was only natural.

In July, Walpole gossips about her ladyship in this wise: "Our beauties are returned (from Paris) and have done no execution. The French would not conceive that Lady Caroline Petersham ever had been handsome, nor that my Lady Coventry has much pretence to be so now. Indeed all the travelled English allow that there is a Madame Brionne, handsomer and a finer figure."

We fear her ladyship must have displeased Walpole in some way, for he had previously been enthusiastic about her perfect figure. He continues in a very depreciatory strain: "Poor Lady Coventry was under piteous disadvantages, for besides being very silly, ignorant of the world, breeding, and speaking no French, and suffered to wear neither red nor powder, she had that perpetual drawback to her beauty—her lord, who is sillier in a wise way, as ignorant, ill-bred, and speaking very little French himself,—just enough to show how ill-bred he is. He is jealous, rude, and scrupulous. At Sir John Bland's, before sixteen persons, he cursed his wife round the table on suspecting she had stolen on a little red, seized her, scrubbed it off by force with a napkin, and then told her that since she had deceived him and broke her promise he would carry her back direct to England."

When we remember how the death of the countess was hastened by her liberal use of "red and white," it is impossible to avoid regretting that this strict discipline was not more perseveringly maintained. Parisian society was much amused at her *naïveté* in excusing herself from attending Madame Pompadour's *fête* on the ground that it was her dancing-master's hour; but we think that such a reply only showed a very sensible determination to make up for her early deficiencies. At the opera, which was in London the constant scene of her triumphs, Mrs. Pitt, a rival English beauty, took a box opposite the countess; and the French people cried out that she was the real English angel, thereby driving away her ladyship in tears.

It is clear, indeed, that the visit to Paris was a *fiasco*. Its society was too *spirituelle* for her ladyship, and her husband was only anxious to get back to his musical festival at Worcester.

She complained to every one how odd it was my lord should treat her so ill when he was so good as to marry her without a shilling. In spite, however, of these complaints of "my dear Cov," as she used to call her husband, the pair seem to have been very fond of each other. We find, to be sure, in the letters of the time, many insinuations about her and Lord Bolingbroke, nephew of the great Bolingbroke. In an age given so much to scandal such reports were only to be expected; but we do not think that in this case there was any foundation for them. There is no doubt that Lady Coventry was deficient in that knowledge of the world and those accomplishments so necessary, especially at that period; but then we must remember that she became a "lady of quality" all at once, and while still in her 'teens.

In spite of these disadvantages Lady Coventry was now the leader of fashion in the metropolis. No assembly was complete without her presence, her dress was eagerly copied by admiring crowds who imagined that in it perhaps lay some of her attraction. She came to her friend Selwyn one day to show him her "birth-night" dress, which was covered over with spots of silver the size of a shilling. The wit told her she would be changed for a guinea. Mrs. Delany, who was evidently very fond of dress and a great authority on the subject, hears that the countess has been at a ball in "high beauty," but, alas! gets no account of her toilette. A short time afterwards she was more fortunate, for she tells us, "Yesterday, after chapel, the duchess brought Lady Coventry to feast me, and a *feast she was!* She is a fine figure, handsome notwithstanding a silly look sometimes about her mouth; she has a thousand airs, but with a sort of innocence that diverts one. Her dress was a black silk sack made for a large hoop, which she wore without any, and it trailed a yard on the ground; she had a cobweb laced handkerchief, a pink satin long cloke lined with ermine mixed with squirrel-skins. On her head a French cap that just covered the top of her head of blond and stood in the form of a butterfly with its wings not quite extended, filled sort of lappets crossed under her chin and tied with pink and green ribbon—a head-dress that would have charmed a *shepherd!* She has a thousand dimples and prettinesses in her cheeks, her eyes a little drooping at the corners, but fine for all that."

This is the most complete description we get anywhere of the countess. It is unfortunate that she died before Reynolds had yet risen to fame. Sir Joshua would have revelled in so fair a subject for his brush. Cotes, however, who preceded Reynolds as a fashionable portrait-painter, has left us the likeness of both beauties. There was a charming little oval portrait by his hand of the younger sister, when Duchess of Argyle, exhibited this summer in the National Portrait Exhibition at Kensington. We certainly agree with those who maintained that the duchess was the handsomer of

the two ; and Dr. Carlyle, who had seen her, speaks of her as undoubtedly the handsomest woman of her time. We have all heard Pliny's story of the citizen of Cadiz who was so enraptured with "Livy's pictured page" as to travel from Spain to Rome for the sole purpose of beholding its author. Mrs. Delany tells us of a lady who professed that she had crossed the Atlantic to see Lady Coventry. "Miss Allen was at the masquerade at Somerset House, and had a great desire to see Lady Coventry ; by this time most people were unmasked, and Miss Allen went up to Lady Coventry (resolved to make a little sport with her), and after looking at her very earnestly, 'I have indeed heard a great deal of this lady's beauty, but it far surpasses all I have heard. I don't know whether I may be called an Englishwoman, but I am just come from New York upon the fame of this lady, whose beauty is talked of far and near, and I think I came for a very good purpose.'"

We don't hear much of the other members of the family after the elevation of the elder Miss Gunnings. Of the four beautiful girls who surrounded Mrs. Gunning when Miss Bellamy first saw the family, one died while a child, and the other made an inferior match in Ireland.

Their only brother entered the army, and having distinguished himself in the American war, became a General and a Knight of the Bath. He had a daughter who, trusting, we suppose, to the proverbial "luck of the Gunnings," made a bold stroke for a ducal coronet, but came to rather signal grief. The affair caused a good deal of scandal in the next generation ; and Miss Gunning's "vaulting ambition having o'erleaped itself," she was content eventually to accept a plain Connaught gentleman.

Now that the peeresses had become "fine ladies," cultivating "Shakespeare and the musical glasses," we hear nothing of their mother. Of Mr. Gunning, who no longer found it necessary to retire into the country to avoid unpleasant consequences, we get a glimpse as he attends his daughters' assemblies, wearing the portrait of Lady Coventry in his button-hole like a *Croix de St. Louis*, and prouder of his decoration than others of the Garter.

In the autumn of the year 1755 the Duchess of Hamilton and her husband paid a visit to the Irish capital, where the Marquis of Hartington had just assumed the reins of government. The good folks in Dublin, we may be sure, were not a whit behind the metropolis in the homage they paid at the shrine of beauty. The natural enthusiasm of the Hibernian was heightened by the knowledge that in this case their devotion was exhibited towards the "native article," and the visit of the duchess was one continued triumph. When the pair dined at the Eagle Tavern, Cork Street, vast crowds of all degrees assembled to see them ; and when they afterwards retired to their lodgings, in Capel Street, the number of spectators was so great as to obstruct the traffic. Of course they were taken to see all the sights,—visited Powerscourt waterfall, a hundred years ago, as now, the most beautiful of them, attended a levee held in their honour, and patronised a charitable *fête*. We wonder if her grace visited the house

in Britain Street from which she and her sister had tossed their valuables to the actress's serving-man below, in order that something at all events might escape the clutches of the bailiffs. It was given out that Lady Coventry was to pass the winter in Dublin, but the rumour proved unfounded, to the intense disappointment of its inhabitants. The countess preferred the company of her great London friends, to whom she appears to have sometimes afforded considerable amusement. Walpole tells us that at a great supper at Lord Hertford's, he would have made her angry had she not been the best-natured creature in the world. We cannot help thinking, however, that her good-nature on this occasion arose chiefly from her dulness in seeing that the company were laughing at her. After her conduct towards Miss Bellamy, it is impossible to speak of her kind-heartedness. Neither, if she possessed any instinctive regard for the feelings of others, would she have told the King, then a feeble old man, that there was but one other sight she cared to see, and that was—a coronation! “She declared, in a very vulgar accent, that if she drank any more she would be ‘*muckibus*.’ ‘Lord,’ said Lady Mary Coke, ‘what is that?’ ‘Oh! it is only Irish for sentimental,’ replied Walpole.”

In strong contrast to the above rather coarse sketch of one of the “goddesses” is a second, by the same hand, of a summer evening at Strawberry Hill, when the other was present. Surely, if the Laureate had beheld it, he would have added another page to his *Dream of Fair Women*. “Strawberry Hill is grown a perfect Paphos; it is the land of beauties. On Wednesday the Duchesses of Hamilton and Richmond, and Lady Ailesbury dined here; the two latter stayed all night. There never was so pretty a sight as to see them all sitting in the shell. A thousand years hence, when I come to grow old, if that can ever be, I shall talk of that event, and tell young people how much handsomer the women of my time were than they will be. I shall say ‘Women alter now. I remember Lady Ailesbury looking handsomer than her daughter, the pretty Duchess of Richmond, as they were sitting in the shell on my terrace with the Duchess of Hamilton, one of the famous Gunnings!’” Pity that Watteau was not alive to immortalize such a scene.

The Duke of Hamilton, who was no less damaged in his person than in his fortune at the period of his marriage, died early in the year 1758. Miss Elizabeth Gunning's union with him does not seem to have been very happy. She did not remain long in retirement, and was soon surrounded anew by an admiring train. It was the general opinion that her beauty had only matured and improved during her first marriage, and that at five-and-twenty she was handsomer than ever. The Duke of Bridgewater was smitten by her charms and offered her his hand, only to be refused; for which refusal posterity is indebted to her grace, as it was after his rejection that the disappointed duke devoted himself to Brindley and the canal which still bears his name. Thus a great national benefit hung on the caprice of a Gunning! The refusal of the Duke of Bridgewater did not, however, imply that the widow intended to remain for ever disconsolate,

and in the winter of 1759 her engagement to John Campbell, afterwards Duke of Argyle, was the talk of the town. Walpole writes to all his friends about it. He tells Sir Horace Mann that it is a match that would not disgrace Arcadia between her romantic history and the handsome person and attractive manners of his intended. To Conway he thus unbosoms himself:—

“It is the prettiest match in the world except yours, and everybody likes it except the Duke of Bridgewater and Lord Coventry. What an extraordinary fate to those two women! who could have believed that a Gunning would unite the two great houses of Campbell and Hamilton? For my part I expect to see my Lady Coventry Queen of Prussia. I would not venture to marry either of them these thirty years for fear of being shuffled out of the world prematurely to make room for the rest of their adventures. The first time that Jack carries the duchess into the Highlands, I am persuaded that some of his second-sighted subjects will see him in a winding sheet with a train of kings behind him as long as those in Macbeth. . . . The head of the house of Argyle is content, and considers the blood of the Hamiltons has purified that of the Gunnings.” In March, 1759, the duchess was married to Mr. Campbell, who soon after succeeded to the family honours. After her second marriage she almost entirely disappeared from the fashionable world, and the name of the Duchess of Argyle is but seldom met with in the memoirs of the time. Not so, however, her sister, who continued to shine in society till the moment of her early death, which occurred about two years later. There is no doubt it was hastened by her liberal use of powder and paint. We even in the present day have little idea how the ladies of that age painted themselves. It is true we have our washes, our cosmetics, our dyes and our artists whose enamel renders the wearer “beautiful for ever,” but nevertheless we doubt if in this respect we go so far as our great-grandmothers. Pope, describing a lady’s toilet a generation before, hinted at the practice then becoming general:—

Now awful beauty puts on all its arms;
The fair each moment rises in her charms,
Repairs her smiles, awakens every grace,
And calls forth all the wonders of the face,
Sees by degrees a purer blush arise,
And keener lightnings quicken in her eyes.

In the middle of the last century the habit had become universal; we must represent to ourselves, as Thackeray says, all fashionable female Europe plastered with white and raddled with red. Walpole, when taking his beautiful niece, afterwards Lady Waldegrave, and her lively friend Miss Ashe, to Vauxhall, says, “They had just refreshed their last layers of red and looked as handsome as crimson could make them.” In an epigram on Lady Coventry’s great rival, Lady Caroline Petersham, the writer asks,

Her blooming cheeks, what paint could draw ‘em?
That paint for which no mortal ever saw ‘em.

It was in the rouge-pot the poor Countess found her early death. Her friends saw that the habit was rapidly bringing on consumption, but no warnings could avail. In the winter of 1759 her health completely broke down, and it was thought that she could not hold out long. Walpole mentions with surprise, in January, 1760, that at the trial of Lord Ferrers for murder, in Westminster Hall, she appeared as well as ever, and was acting over again "the old comedy of eyes" with Lord Bolingbroke. The Countess lingered until the autumn of that year. Her death-bed was indeed a sad one. The deadly poison which she was in the habit of using to heighten her charms committed such ravages in the end upon her cheeks that she became a hideous object. Conscious of her changed appearance, she would see no one; and it is said that she obliged even her attendants to hand her medicines through the bed-curtains. She died on the 1st of October, 1760, after a short reign of beauty, and many moralized on the sad ending of her brilliant career. Mason wrote her elegy, which was pronounced beautiful, though we must confess it appears to us stiff and affected. Her husband married a second time, and Selwyn, who was very fond of the two daughters of the beautiful countess, gives us an amusing account of the way they sat in their nursery conspiring against their stepmother. The Duchess of Argyle does not appear to have been so frivolous as her sister. She had a mind and a will of her own apparently. We are several times informed that "Betty Gunning has a fine spirit." When several years later Boswell accompanied Johnson on his tour to the Hebrides, the Duke asked them both to his castle. Dearly as Boszy loved a lord, he was yet afraid to go on account of the terrible duchess, whom he feared he had offended in days long past by the part he had taken in the great Douglas cause. In the year 1776 her ladyship was created a peeress in her own right, as Baroness Hamilton. Even at that time, whenever she attended Court, where she held a post in attendance upon Queen Charlotte, she was conspicuous for her elegance and beauty. She died in the year 1790, being then in her fifty-seventh year. Two of her sons, by her marriage with the Duke of Hamilton, succeeded in turn to that title; while her daughter married the Earl of Derby, and was grandmother to the present Prime Minister, and two of her sons, by her second union, inherited successively the honours of the ancient house of Argyle.

So ended the strange career of the famous Gunnings. Born and reared in obscurity, they reached in a moment the pinnacle of rank and fashion, and gained titles which would have been a magnificent reward for the most illustrious services to the country. Their lofty position they owed entirely to their beauty; one of them, at least, was silly, and perhaps vulgar; neither possessed culture or education, and yet in one short year they "came, saw, and conquered." If any one be inclined to doubt the empire of beauty over the heart of man, or to maintain that its dominion is past, let him read the history of "the beautiful Miss Gunnings."

The Marriage Law of the Three Kingdoms.

THE Yelverton case having again appeared in the House of Lords, naturally draws attention to the anomalous condition of the Marriage Law of the Three Kingdoms, and suggests reflections not flattering to the uniformity of legislation. As, however, a Marriage Commission has been sitting to receive evidence of skilled and competent persons, we may hope that the report, when laid on the table of the House, will be the foundation of a carefully considered and uniform measure on the subject of the Marriage Laws of the United Kingdom, and that a contract so momentous may be rendered easy of proof and intelligible without the aid of experts. It is only they who have been professionally engaged in the consideration of the law of marriage, as expounded in courts, who are aware of the intricacies of the apparently simple tie uniting man and woman in true matrimony. To be told that in Scotland you may be married before the process of an ordinary flirtation is begun, whilst in England or Ireland you have to publish banns, or obtain licence, or get the certificate of a marriage registrar, with a variety of notices and entries in books, is a slur on our state politics.

The Scottish people have, with their wonted tenacity, adhered to the ancient system founded on the civil law as to marriage, whereby a contract *per verba de presenti*, or a *promise de futuro cum copula*, is considered sufficient to constitute a legally valid marriage, whereas by the common law of England down to the Marriage Act (the 26 George II. cap. 33), it was essential to the constitution of a complete marriage that there should be a religious solemnity; that both modes of obligation should exist, the civil and the religious; that beside the civil contract (as in Scotland *per verba de presenti*), which has always remained the same, there should be a religious ceremony, not always the same, but varying from time to time according to the variations of the laws of the Church.

The law of Ireland was founded on the common law of England, and was what the English law was prior to the passage of the Marriage Act; but thenceforward divergencies, according to the ecclesiastical systems in operation in either country, took place.

It is difficult, however, to realize this state of things—that a child may be born in Scotland of unmarried parents domiciled in that country, which parents may afterwards intermarry in Scotland, that such child may be capable of inheriting lands in Scotland, and yet be incapable of inheriting lands in England or Ireland, and this because of the anomalies of the Marriage Law operating in countries under the same government and the

same sovereign. Prior to the English Marriage Act it was generally supposed that it was not requisite to have any peculiar religious ceremony to constitute marriage, and this because of the ceremony resting on the ancient common law, which, as in Scotland, only required the consent of the parties; but there was this distinction, that to make a full and complete marriage in England, an application might be made to the spiritual court to compel the solemnization of an actual marriage; and hence originated the notion, that it was always necessary to have the ceremony performed in presence and with the intervention of a minister in holy orders. But the common law of England did not require the consent of any person to render valid the marriage contract, save that of the parties themselves, and so far was in accordance with the civil law; but abuses springing up, the Council of Trent intervened to prevent the spread of clandestine marriages, and such was also the object of the English Marriage Act. Before that Act a marriage was valid though celebrated in a private house instead of in the church, as the rubric prescribes; valid too even though no witness was present other than the clergyman, instead of in face of the congregation; valid though no person was present to give the bride away, valid without banns or licence, without the use of the ring, without the repetition of the Marriage Service. All that was then necessary was that the parties took one another for husband and wife by words in the present tense, and before a priest, or, since the Reformation, before a deacon. But the Marriage Act, known as Lord Hardwicke's Act, enacted that thenceforward (1753) all marriages should be celebrated in a church and by banns or licence, and no proceedings should be had in any spiritual court to compel the celebration of any marriage *in facie ecclesie*, by reason of any contract of matrimony, whether *per verba de presenti* or *verba de futuro*.

"The general law of Western Europe before the Council of Trent seems clear," says Mr. Justice Willes in the House of Lords' Cases, 906. "The fact of marriage—that is, the mutual consent of competent persons to take one another for man and wife during their joint lives—was alone considered necessary to constitute true and lawful matrimony in the contemplation of both Church and State." To the same effect are the observations of Lord Lyndhurst—"that a contract *per verba de presenti* was, prior to 1753, considered to be a marriage, that it was, in respect of its constituting the substance and forming the indissoluble knot of matrimony, regarded as *verum matrimonium*, is, I apprehend, clear beyond all doubt."

It may have been found difficult to procure evidence of the consent or contract after the celebration, and hence the presence of a priest became essential, to have trustworthy proof of the celebration, independent of another suggested reason for his presence—that if he were aware of any lawful impediment he could prevent the ceremony. Now, to render valid a marriage, in addition to consent, there must be some previous notice or proclamation of banns, or licence, and a clergyman must be present, or the marriage registrar of the district, and the marriage must

be in an authorized place and at authorized hours. In Scotland it is still sufficient if both parties mutually declare themselves married; but this must be in presence of witnesses, or the consent must be expressly or impliedly declared by writing.

From that first English Marriage Act (26 George II. cap. 33) no legislative interference on the subject took place for seventy years; but thenceforward, and down to the 4 George IV. cap. 76, several statutes were passed, all considering a religious ceremony as essential to the validity of the marriage contract. Later statutes have been framed, enabling marriages to be solemnized according to any form or ceremony the parties see fit to adopt; but the 4 George IV. cap. 76, though qualified as to marriages solemnized according to the Established Church, is not repealed by any subsequent statute. By that statute the banns are to be published in the parish church or an authorized chapel on three Sundays, according to the rules prescribed by the rubric prefixed to the office of matrimony in the Book of Common Prayer. A book is to be kept for the registration of the banns, to be signed by the officiating minister; and by this means accurate evidence is forthcoming of the solemnization of the ceremony, because, in addition to the presence of the minister, two witnesses must be present, who also sign the entry.

This statute, however, did not affect the marriages of Quakers or Jews. Subsequent legislation dealt with the marriage contract, where no religious ceremony is considered by the parties necessary to its validity, beginning with an Act of Parliament of 6 & 7 William IV. cap. 85, and ending with 3 & 4 of the Queen, cap. 72. These Acts provide for general registries, for the appointment of marriage registrars, for enabling them to grant licences, and for the celebration of marriage according to forms there specified by the registrar himself. Entries of these marriages are preserved in books provided for the purpose, the names of the parties, the date of the celebration of the ceremony, and the witnesses present; again, by this means is evidence furnished of the fact of the marriage, and that all due forms have been complied with.

Such is the law of England. As before stated, the general marriage law of Ireland was identical with that of England before Lord Hardwicke's Act, but it has been modified by some statutes of the Irish legislature. The common law of that country did not consider the consent of parents necessary to the validity of the contract; but by a statute of 9 George II. cap. 11 of the Irish Parliament, the marriages of minors were void, if made without the consent of parents or guardians, and if the minors were entitled to a certain amount of property. It further inflicted penalties for the celebration of marriage between Roman Catholics and Protestants, and its provisions were extended by a later statute of the same reign, which made the celebration a felony in the celebrant. Both these statutes were repealed by the 7 & 8 of Victoria, cap. 81. But other statutes dealt with other offences in reference to the ceremony. An Act of 32 George III. cap. 21, autho-

rized clergymen of the Established Church to marry Protestants and Roman Catholics, but it prohibited a Roman Catholic priest celebrating the ceremony unless it had been previously performed by a Protestant clergyman. An earlier statute of 19 George II. cap. 13 (Irish), annulled all marriages celebrated by a Roman Catholic priest between Protestants, or persons professing to be such within twelve months previous to the ceremony, and Roman Catholics—a statute passed to counteract the effect of an occasional profession, and a statute made remarkable by reason of its being the statute on which the alleged Irish marriage of Major Yelverton rested. In answer to the priest, he stated he was a Catholic Protestant; and the evidence of clergymen and others proving that the Major had gone to the Established Church and was still a professing Protestant within twelve months, the lady being a Roman Catholic, the Irish marriage was not legal. By an Act of 83 George III. cap. 21, a penalty of 500*l.* was inflicted on a Roman Catholic priest marrying two Protestants, or a professing Protestant and a Roman Catholic; but this Act was repealed, so far as the penalty was concerned, by 3 & 4 William IV. cap. 102, though it left the prohibition against the validity of the marriage untouched. Now, however, by the 5 & 6 of the Queen, cap. 28, any Roman Catholic priest celebrating such marriage, unless the ceremony have been previously performed by a Protestant clergyman, is liable to transportation for seven years. Such, in Ireland, is still the law of mixed marriages, which, however, are now much discountenanced by the Roman Catholic Church; and we doubt not but that legislation will remove the penalty still existing on the Roman Catholic priest; but if it do so, that Church should be obliged to keep and furnish, when required, an accurate register of its marriages. Strange to say, there is no legal prohibition against minors marrying in that Church; whatever ecclesiastical rules there may be on that head, there is no statute prohibiting them.

The *cause célèbre* on the Scotch law of marriage is the Dalrymple case, and though some of the *dicta* enunciated by Lord Stowell, the great jurist who decided it, have been questioned, his judgment is ever referred to as the exponent of the principles which should guide tribunals dealing with the law of marriage.

Mr. Dalrymple was a member of a Scotch family, but was brought up from early years in England. At the age of nineteen, being then a cornet in the Dragoon Guards, he accompanied his regiment to Edinburgh, where it was quartered in March or April, 1804. Shortly after his arrival in Edinburgh, he met in the ordinary intercourse of society a Miss Joanna Gordon, the daughter of a gentleman of respectable condition in life. Mr. Dalrymple was in the habit of visiting at the lady's father's house, both in Edinburgh and at his country seat at Braid, near Edinburgh. Besides the ordinary visits, it appeared he and the lady had clandestine interviews at the father's house, and for several nights they had remained together. But there was no evidence of cohabitation, save what existed

in the surmises of the servants and of the lady's sister. Mr. Dalrymple left for England in 1805, and having sailed for Malta, continued abroad till 1808, in which year he returned to England. His father having died, Miss Gordon thought it time to establish her marriage, and she accordingly sent to a friend of Mr. Dalrymple copies of what she termed her marriage lines. At this period Mr. Dalrymple was on the eve of a marriage with a sister of the then Duchess of St. Albans, and ultimately celebrated with the English lady in a formal and regular manner, in *facie ecclesie*, the ceremony of marriage. Thereupon Miss Gordon applied to the Consistorial Court of London to compel Mr. Dalrymple to the performance of the marriage contract into which she alleged he had entered with herself. The evidence was that of persons who deposed as to the interviews at her father's house, of nocturnal meetings, and of his visiting the house at unusual times. But unhappily for him, she produced letters and documents written to her, in which he called her his wife; and amid these exhibits was one or two of this kind:—

No. 1.

A Sacred Promise.

I do hereby promise to marry you as soon as it is in my power, and never marry another.

J. DALRYMPLE.

And I promise the same.

JOANNA GORDON.

No. 2.

I hereby declare that Joanna Gordon is my lawful wife.

J. DALRYMPLE.

28th Aug. 1804.

And I hereby acknowledge John Dalrymple as my lawful husband.

J. GORDON.

The social position of the parties, Mr. Dalrymple being heir presumptive to the earldom of Stair, Miss Gordon being the daughter of a gentleman of position, and Miss Manners being the sister of a duchess, awakened great interest at the time; but the parties are forgotten, the somewhat romantic incidents of the case have faded from memory, and nothing remains but that unrivalled judgment of Lord Stowell tracing the marriage law from its earliest authentic period, and affording to every student of our country's history an admirable summary of the principles which have regulated the enforcement of the marriage contract. Miss Gordon was successful; Mr. Dalrymple was ordered to restore to her conjugal rights, and Miss Manners, as far as the law was concerned, remained Miss Manners. From that judgment may be deduced these positions:—Marriage is a contract of natural law,—the parent, not the child of civil society—and in civilized countries, acting under a sense of the force of sacred obligations, it had the sanction of religion superadded, and then it became a religious as well as a civil and

natural contract: it then came under the cognizance of the Church, and it was elevated to the dignity of a sacrament; and so the law of the church, the canon law, though it recognized it as a sacrament, so far regarded the natural and civil origin of marriage as to hold that where the natural and civil contract was formed it had the full essence of matrimony without the intervention of a priest.

The consent therefore of two persons expressed in words of present mutual acceptance constituted an actual and legal marriage, and consummation was presumed as following that acceptance. At the Reformation, England disclaimed the doctrine of a sacrament in marriage, retaining, however, the rules of the canon law that were founded in the natural and civil contract of marriage. As we have observed, the marriage law of Ireland was considered the same as that of England prior to the Marriage Act of George II., but in 1840 there was raised a question on an indictment for bigamy, which resulted in a protracted legal battle, ending in the House of Lords. This case was the origin of the existing statute law in Ireland now regulating the marriage ceremony in that country; but this statute does not affect the Roman Catholics, Quakers, or Jews. That statute is the 7th & 8th of the Queen, and became necessary by reason of the following incidents.

In 1840 Dr. Miller, the Surrogate in the Consistorial Court of Armagh, having to decide a question raised before him, on the validity of a marriage between a Presbyterian and a member of the Episcopal Church solemnized by a Presbyterian minister, had declared such contract to be null and void. In the North of Ireland, where such marriages had been of frequent occurrence, this judgment aroused great hostility. The intensity of the indignation was increased, when it was known that the decision was rested on a Saxon canon of the tenth century, requiring the presence of a "priest" necessary to validate a marriage; and the Presbyterian minister not being episcopally ordained, was held not to come within the canonical requirement of one in holy orders. The question before the Consistorial Court was as to the right of administration to the property of a deceased individual, and in the conflict amongst the next of kin the legality of the marriage was disputed. Shortly after the judgment of Dr. Miller was pronounced, a man being indicted for bigamy in the county of Antrim, pleaded that though he had been previously united in wedlock by a Presbyterian minister, such was no valid contract, because he was an Episcopalian. A special verdict was found by the jury, under the direction of the judge who tried the prisoner, and the question came before the Court of Queen's Bench in Ireland. The judges were divided in opinion as to the validity of the marriage, and the case was taken to the House of Lords. Lords Brougham, Campbell, and Denman were for reversing the judgment of the Irish Court; Lords Abinger, Cottenham, and the Lord Chancellor were against the reversal; and so, according to the rule *presumitur pro negante*, the judgment of the Queen's Bench in Ireland was affirmed, and the prisoner acquitted; thus deciding that to

validate a marriage in Ireland the ceremony must be in presence of a priest in holy orders. To justify this decision there was cited a decretal of Edmund, promulgated in 940, directing that "at the nuptials there shall be a mass priest by law who shall with God's blessing bind the union to all posterity." But it was rather pointedly asked, If this be law, why are not all the Saxon enactments law? why was the law of King Ina not part of the Statute Book, which imposed the penalty of forfeiture of goods on a man who had not his child baptized; or the law of King Alfred, which inflicted a graduated scale of fines for criminal conversation, according to the rank of the parties? In truth, it would appear that the enactment of Edmund simply recommended a more formal ceremony, but it did not annul a marriage contracted without sacerdotal benediction. This case, which is known as *The Queen v. Millis*, has been more or less questioned, and it is generally assumed that though it is a binding authority of the highest appellate tribunal, yet if the question involved in it were reopened, the decision would be different. The effect of it was somewhat alarming, for the legitimacy of many Presbyterian families in the North of Ireland was assailed by it; and so in the same session of Parliament in which it was decided, the Act of 7 & 8 of the Queen was passed, validating previous marriages that had been solemnized by Presbyterian ministers between members of different communions, and providing in future for the registration of all marriages depending on the civil contract as well as the religious. In fact it is an analogous statute with those applicable to England dealing with Nonconformists and persons who object to a religious ceremony. It came into operation on the 31st March, 1845, and was amended by 9 & 10 of the Queen, cap. 72, and by 12 & 13 of the Queen, cap. 99, but not altered in any essential. Now, therefore, in Ireland all the rules prescribed by the rubric concerning the solemnizing of marriages continue to be observed by every person in holy orders of the United Church of England and Ireland, but the giving of notice to the marriage registrar of the district, and the issuing of his certificate, may be used instead of the publication of banns; and Presbyterian marriages may be solemnized in Presbyterian churches according to the form used therein. But the Act does not affect Roman Catholics, whose rights are not interfered with if the marriages celebrated by them were legal previously to the Act passing; nor does it alter the contract of marriage as solemnized by Quakers and Jews, for such marriage performed according to their usage is good in law, if both parties be Quakers or profess the Jewish religion. These persons, however, must give notice to the registrar and obtain his certificate before the ceremony.

Scotland then remains as before, the marriage being unaffected by any statute, the law only requiring the consent of the parties to take each other as husband and wife; but this consent is required to be proved by a witness present when it was given, or by a writing signed by the parties. But of it may be said what was observed by Serjeant Maynard in the time of the Commonwealth, "that the law lies very loose as to

things that are naturally essential to marriages, as to pre-contracts and dissolving marriages."

It would be interesting to detail some of the cases as reported in law books in reference to the marriage law, but those who are desirous of mastering the subject cannot do better than peruse the reports we have before referred to, and especially an able *resumé* of the whole matter by Mr. Justice Willes in the case of *Beamish v. Beamish*, in the House of Lords' Reports. That was the case of a clergyman in holy orders going to the house of a person named Lewis in the city of Cork, and there performing a ceremony of marriage between himself and one Isabella Fitzgerald, by reading between them in the house the form of solemnization of matrimony in the Book of Common Prayer, and by declaring that he Samuel S. Beamish took Isabella Fitzgerald as his wedded wife, and Isabella Fitzgerald declaring she took him for her wedded husband, and by placing a ring on her finger and pronouncing the blessing in the appointed form. No person was present at the ceremony, but its performance was seen by a female—who, however, did not hear what passed between them. The validity of this marriage was raised in an ejectment proceeding on a question of legitimacy; the Court of Queen's Bench in Ireland held it was a valid, though an irregular marriage, but the House of Lords decided that it was null and void. This decision flowed from *The Queen v. Millis*—for that case deciding that to constitute a valid marriage by the common law it must have been celebrated in the presence of a clergyman in holy orders, the fact that the bridegroom was himself a clergyman in holy orders, there being no other clergyman present, would not make it a valid marriage. Mr. Beamish might have somewhere met in his reading with this passage from a document of the 10th century, to be found in *Ancient Laws*, p. 335, chap. ii., and it might have been well if he had pondered it: "A priest's wife is nothing but a snare of the Devil, and he who is ensnared thereby on to his end, he will be seized fast by the Devil, and he also must pass afterwards into the hands of fiends and totally perish."

Little Red Riding Hood.

I.



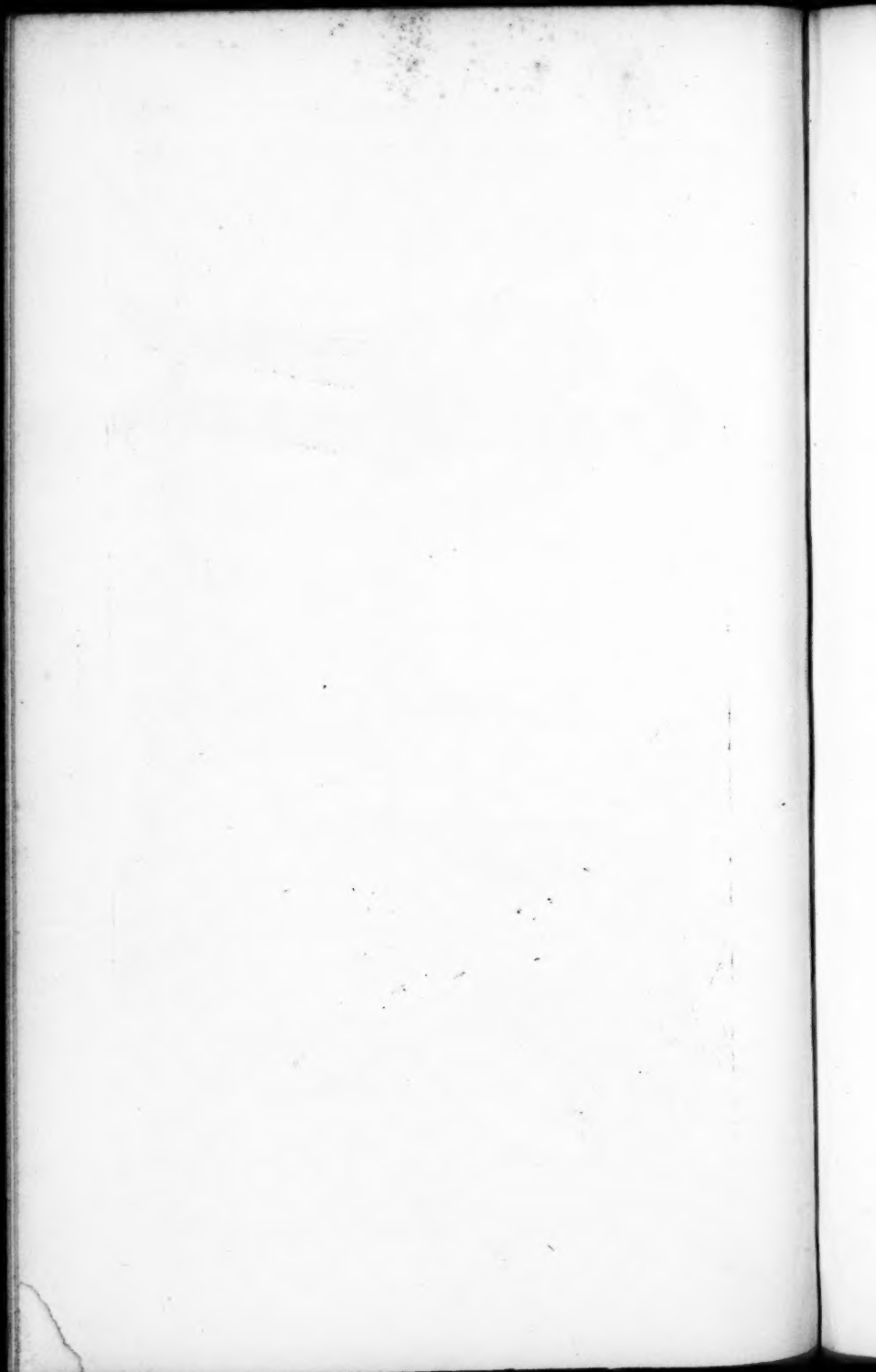
THERE is something sad in most pretty stories, in most lovely strains, in the tenderest affections and friendships ; but tragedy is a different thing from the indefinable feeling which lifts us beyond to-day into that dear and happy region where our dearest loves, and plays, and dreams, are to be found even in childish times. Poor little Red Riding Hood, with bright eyes glancing from her scarlet caplet, has been mourned by generations of children ; but though they pity her, and lament her sad fate, she is no familiar playmate and companion. That terrible wolf with the fiery eyes, glaring through the brushwood, haunts them from

the very beginning of the story ;—it is too sad, too horrible, and they hastily turn the leaves and fly to other and better loved companions, with whose troubles they sympathize, for they are but passing woes, and they know that brighter times are in store. For the poor little maiden at the well, for dear Cinderella, for Roe-brother and little sister, wandering through the glades of the forest, and Snowwhite and her sylvan court of kindly woodland dwarfs. All these belong to the sweet and gentle region where beautiful calm suns shine after the storm, amid fair landscapes, and gardens, and palaces. Even we elders sympathize with the children in this feeling, although we are more or less hardened by time, and have ourselves wandering in the midway of life met with wolves roving through the forest ; wolves from whose cruel claws, alas ! no father's or mother's love can protect us, and against whose wiles all warnings except those of our own experience are vain. And these wolves devour little boys as well as little girls and pats of butter.

This is no place to write of some stories, so sad and so hopeless that they can scarcely be spoken ; although good old Perrault, in his simple way, to some poor Red Riding Hoods straying from the path, utters a



RÉMY'S LEAVE-TAKING



word of warning rhyme at the end of the old French edition :—Some stories are too sad, others too trifling. The sketch which I have in my mind is no terrible tragedy, but a silly little tale, so foolish and trivial that if it were not that it comes in its place with the others, I should scarcely attempt to repeat it. I met all the personages by chance at Fontainebleau only the other day.

The wolf was playing the fiddle under Little Red Riding Hood's window. Little Red Riding Hood was peeping from behind her cotton curtains. Rémy (that was the wolf's Christian name) could see the little balls bobbing, and guessed that she was there. He played on louder than ever, dragging his bow with long sobbing chords across his fiddle-strings, and as he played a fairy palace arose at his bidding, more beautiful than the real old palace across the Place that we had come to see. The fairy palace arose story upon story, lovely to look upon, enchanted; a palace of art, with galleries, and terraces, and belvederes, and orange-flowers scenting the air, and fragrant blossoms falling in snow-showers, and fountains of life murmuring and turning marble to gold as they flowed. Red Riding Hood from behind her cotton curtains, and Rémy, her cousin, outside in the courtyard, were the only two inhabitants of this wonderful building. They were alone in it together, far away in that world of which I have been speaking, at a long long distance from the everyday all round about them, though the cook of the hotel was standing at his kitchen-door, and the stable-boy was grinning at Rémy's elbow, and H. and I, who had arrived only that evening, were sitting resting on the bench in front of the hotel, among the autumnal profusion of nasturtiums and marigolds with which the court-yard was planted. H. and I had come to see the palace, and to walk about in the stately old gardens, and to breathe a little quiet and silence after the noise of the machines thundering all day in the Great Exhibition of the Champ de Mars, the din of the cannons firing, of the carriages and multitudes rolling along the streets.

The Maynards, Red Riding Hood's parents, were not passers-by like ourselves, they were comfortably installed at the hôtel for a month at a time, and came over once a year to see Mrs. Maynard's mother, an old lady who had lived at Fontainebleau as long as her two daughters could remember. This old lady's name was Madame Capuchon; but her first husband had been an Englishman, like Mr. Maynard, her son-in-law, who was also her nephew by this first marriage. Both Madame Capuchon's daughters were married,—Marthe, the eldest, to Henry Maynard, an English country gentleman; Félicie, the youngest, to the Baron de la Louvière, who resided at Poitiers and who was sous-préfet there.

It is now nearly forty years since Madame Capuchon first went to live at Fontainebleau, in the old house at the corner of the Rue de la Lampe. It has long been doomed to destruction, with its picturesque high roof, its narrow windows and balconies, and sunny old brick passages and staircases, with the round ivy *ceil-de-bœuf* windows. Staircases were piled up of brick in the time of the Lewises, broad and wide, and easy to climb, and

not of polished wood, like the slippery flights of to-day. However, the old house is in the way of a row of shops and a projected café and newspaper-office, so are the ivy-grown garden-walls, the acacia-trees, the sun-dial, and the old stone seat. It is a pity that newer buildings cannot sometimes be selected for destruction; they might be rebuilt and re-destroyed again and again, and people who care for such things might be left in peace a little longer to hold the dear old homes and traditions of their youth.

Madame Capuchon, however, is a kind and despotic old lady; she has great influence and authority in the town, and during her life the old house is safe. It is now, as I have said, forty years since she first came to live there,—a young widow for the second time, with two little daughters and a faithful old maid to be her only companions in her flight from the world where she had known great troubles and changes. Madame Capuchon and her children inhabited the two upper stories of the old house. The rez de chaussée was partly a porter's lodge, partly a warehouse, and partly a little apartment which the proprietor reserved for his use. He died twice during Madame Capuchon's tenancy; once he ventured to propose to her—but this was the former owner of the place, not the present proprietor, an old bachelor who preferred his Paris café and his boulevard to the stately silence and basking life of Fontainebleau.

This life suited Madame Capuchon, who from sorrow at first, and then from habit, continued the same silent cloistered existence for years—years which went by and separated her quietly but completely from her old habits and friends and connections and long-past troubles, while the little girls grew up and the mother's beauty changed, faded quietly away in the twilight life she was leading.

The proprietor who had ventured to propose to the widow, and who had been refused with so much grace and decision that his admiration remained unaltered, was no more; but shortly before his death he had a second time accosted her with negotiations of marriage, not for himself this time, but for a nephew of his, the Baron de la Louvière, who had seen the young ladies by chance, heard much good of them from his uncle and their attached attendant Simonne, and learnt that their dot was ample and their connections respectable. Marthe, the eldest daughter, was the least good-looking of the two, but to most people's mind far more charming than Félicie, the second. M. de la Louvière had at first a slight preference for Marthe, but learning through his uncle that an alliance was contemplated between her and an English connection of her mother's, he announced himself equally anxious to obtain the hand of Félicie, the younger sister. After some hesitation, much addition of figures, subtraction, division, rule of three worked out, consultations and talk between Simonne and her mistress, and long discussions with Henry Maynard himself, who was staying with a friend at Fontainebleau at the time, this favour was accorded to the baron.

The young baroness went off nothing loth: she was bored at home, she did not like the habit of severity and silence into which her mother had

fallen. She was a slim, active, decided person, of calm affections, but passionately fond of her own way, as indeed was Madame Capuchon herself, for all her regrets for that past in which it must be confessed she had always done exactly as she liked, and completely ruled her two husbands. For all Madame Capuchon's blacks and drabs and seclusion, and shut shutters, and confessors, and shakes of the head, she had greatly cheered up by this time : she had discovered in her health a delightful source of interest and amusement ; Félicie's marriage was as good as a play, as the saying goes ; and then came a catastrophe, still more exciting than Félicie's brilliant prospects, which occupied all the spare moments of the two years which succeeded the youngest girl's departure from home.

Madame Capuchon's nephew, Henry Maynard, was, as I have said, staying at Fontainebleau with a friend, who was unfortunately a very good-looking young man of very good family, who had come to Fontainebleau to be out of harm's way, and to read French for some diplomatic appointment. Maynard used to talk to him about his devotion for his pretty cousin Marthe with the soft trill in her voice and the sweet quick eyes. Young Lord John, alas, was easily converted to this creed,—he also took a desperate fancy to the pretty young lady ; and Madame Capuchon, whose repeated losses had not destroyed a certain ambition which had always been in her nature, greatly encouraged the young man. And so one day poor Maynard was told that he must resign himself to his hard fate. He had never hoped much, for he knew well enough that his cousin, as he called her, did not care for him ; Marthe had always discouraged him, although her mother would have scouted the notion that one of her daughters should resist any decree she might lay down, or venture to think for herself on such matters.

When Lord John proposed in the English fashion to Marthe one evening in the deep embrasure of the drawing-room window, Madame Capuchon was enchanted, although disapproving of the irregularity of the proceeding. She announced her intention of settling upon her eldest daughter a sum so large and so much out of the proportion to the dot which she had accorded to Madame de la Louvière, that the baron hearing of it by chance through Monsieur Micotton, the family solicitor, was furious, and an angry correspondence then commenced between him and his mother-in-law, which lasted many years, and in which Madame Capuchon found another fresh interest to attach her to life and an unflinching vent for much of her spare energy and excitement.

Henry Maynard went back to his father's house at Littleton on Thames, to console himself as best he could among the punts and the water-lilies. Lord John went back to England to pass his examination, and to gain his family's consent, without which he said he could not marry ; and Marthe waited in the old house with Simonne and her mother, and that was the end of her story.

Lord John didn't pass his examination, but interest was made for him, and he was given another chance, and he got the diplomatic appointment

all the same, and he went to Russia and was heard of no more at Fontainebleau. Madame Capuchon was naturally surprised at his silence. While Marthe wondered and wearied, but spoke no word of the pain which consumed her. Her mother sat down and wrote to the duke, presented her compliments, begged to remind him of his son's engagement, and requested information of the young man's whereabouts and intentions. In the course of a week she received a few polite lines from the duchess, regretting that she could give Madame Capuchon no information as to Lord John's whereabouts or intentions, informing her that she had made some mistake as to his engagement, and begging to decline any further correspondence on the subject, on paper so thick that Simonne had to pay double postage for the epistle, and it would scarcely burn when Madame Capuchon flung it into the fire. The widow stamped her little foot, flashed her eyes, bit her lips, darted off her compliments to the duchess a second time, and begged to inform her that her son was a coward and a false gentleman, and that it was the Capuchon family that now begged to decline any further communication with people who held their word so cheaply. Naturally enough, no answer came to this, although Madame Capuchon expected one, and fumed and flashed and scolded for weeks after, during which poor Marthe still wondered and knew nothing.

"Don't let us tell her anything about it," Simonne had said when the first letter came. "Let her forget *tout doucement*," and Madame Capuchon agreed.

And so Marthe waited and forgot *tout doucement*, as Simonne proposed, for fifteen years, and the swans came sailing past her when she took her daily walk, and the leaves fell and grew again, and every night the shadow of the old lamp swinging in the street outside cast its quaint lines and glimmer across her dark leaf-shaded room, and the trees rustled when the wind blew, and her dreams were stranger and less vivid.

Once Henry Maynard wrote soon after Lord John's desertion, renewing his proposals, to Marthe herself and not to his aunt; but the letter came too soon. And, indeed, it was by Henry Maynard's letter that Marthe first realized for certain what had happened.

But it came too soon. She could not yet bear to hear her faithless lover blamed. Lord John was a villain and unworthy of a regret, Henry said. Would she not consent to accept an honest man instead of a false one?

"No, no, no, a hundred times no," cried Marthe to herself, with something of her mother's spirit, and she nervously wrote her answer and slid out by herself and posted it. She never dared tell Madame Capuchon what she had done.

As time went on, one or two other "offers" were made to her; but Marthe was so reluctant that as they were not very good ones Madame Capuchon let them go by, and then Marthe had a long illness, and then more time passed by.

"What have we been about?" said Madame Capuchon to her con-

fidante one day as her daughter left the room. "Here she is an old maid, and it is all her own obstinacy."

At thirty-three Marthe was still unmarried: a gracious, faded woman, who had caught the trick of being sad; although she had no real trouble, and had almost forgotten Lord John. But she had caught the trick of being sad, as I say, of flitting aimlessly across the rooms, of remembering and remembering instead of living for to-day.

Madame Capuchon was quite cheerful by this time; besides her health, her angry correspondence, her confessor, her game of dominoes, and her talks with Simonne, she had many little interests to fill up spare gaps and distract her when M. de la Louvière's demands were too much for her temper. There was her comfortable hot and well-served little dinner to look forward to, her paper to read of a night, her chocolate in bed every morning, on a nice little tray with a pat of fresh butter and her nice little new roll from the English baker's. Madame was friande, and Simonne's delight was to cater for her. But none of these distractions quite sufficed to give an interest to poor Marthe's sad life. She was too old for the fun and excitement of youth, and too young for the little comforts, the resignations and satisfactions of age. Simonne, the good old fat woman, used to think of her as a little girl, and try to devise new treats for her as she had done when Félicie and Marthe were children. Marthe would kiss her old nurse gratefully, and think, with a regretful sigh, how it was that she could no longer be made happy by a bunch of flowers, a hot buttered cake, a new trimming to her apron: she would give the little cake away to the porter's grandchildren, put the flowers into water and leave them, fold up the apron, and, to Simonne, most terrible sign of all, forget it in the drawer. It was not natural, something must be done, thought the old woman.

The old woman thought and thought, and poked about, and one day, with her spectacles on her nose, deciphered a letter which was lying on Madame Capuchon's table; it was signed Henry Maynard, and announced the writer's arrival at Paris. Next day, when Simonne was frizzling her mistress's white curls (they had come out of their seclusion for some years past), she suddenly asked what had become of Monsieur Maynard, Madame's English nephew, who used to come so often before Mademoiselle Félicie was married.

"What is that to you?" said the old lady. "He is at Paris. I heard from him yesterday."

"And why don't you ask him to come down and see you?" said Simonne, frizzling away at the crisp silver locks. "It would cheer up Mademoiselle to have some one to talk to. We don't want any one; we have had our day, you and I, but Mademoiselle, I confess I don't like to see her going on as she does."

"Nor I!" said the old lady, sharply. "She is no credit to me. One would almost think that she reproaches me for her existence, after all the sacrifices I have made."

Simonne went on frizzling without stopping to inquire what these sacrifices might be. "I will order a fricandeau for to-morrow," she said; "Madame had better invite Monsieur to spend the day."

"Simonne, you are an old fool," said her mistress. "I have already written to my nephew to invite him to my house."

Maynard came and partook of the fricandeau, and went for a little walk with Marthe, and he had a long talk with his aunt and old Simonne in the evening, and went away quite late—past ten o'clock it was. Maynard did not go back to Paris that night, but slept at the hotel, and early next morning there came a note addressed to Marthe, in which the writer stated that he was still of the same mind in which he had been fifteen years before, and if she was of a different way of thinking, would she consent to accept him as her husband?

And so it came about that long after the first best hopes of her youth were over, Marthe consented to leave her own silent home for her husband's, a melancholy middle-aged bride, sad and frightened at the thought of the tempestuous world into which she was being cast adrift, and less able, at thirty-three than at twenty, to hold her own against the kindly domineering old mother, who was much taken with the idea of this marriage, and vowed that Marthe should go, and that no daughter of hers should die an old maid if she could help it. She had been married twice herself; once at least, if possible, she was determined that both her daughters should follow her example. Felicie's choice was not all that Madame Capuchon could have wished as far as liberality and amiability of character were concerned, but Felicie herself was happy, and indeed, so Madame Capuchon had much reason to suspect—abetted her husband in his grasping and extortionate demands. "And now Marthe's turn had come," said Madame Capuchon, complacently, sitting up among her pillows, sipping her chocolate; "she was the eldest, she should have married first; she had been a good and devoted daughter, she would make an excellent wife," cried the valiant old lady.

When Marthe demurred, "Go, my child, go in peace, only go, go, go. Simonne is quite able to take care of me: do you think I want the sacrifice of your life? For what should I keep you? Can you curl me, can you play at dominoes? You are much more necessary to your cousin than you are to me. He will be here directly—what a figure you have made of yourself. Simonne, come here, give a coup de peigne to Mademoiselle. There, I hear the bell, Henry will be waiting."

"He does not mind waiting, mamma," said Marthe, smiling sadly. "He has waited fifteen years already."

"So much the worse for you both," cried the old lady, angrily. "If I had only had my health, if my spirits had not been completely crushed in those days, I never would have given in to such ridiculous ideas."

Ridiculous ideas! This was all the epitaph that was uttered by any one of them over the grave where poor Marthe had buried with much pain and many tears the trouble of her early life. She herself had no

other text for the wasted love of her youth. How angry she had been with her cousin Henry when he warned her once, how she had hated him when he asked her to marry him before, tacitly forcing upon her the fact of his friend's infidelity, and now it was to Maynard after all that she was going to be married. After all that had passed, all the varying fates, and loves, and hopes, and expectations of her life. A sudden alarm came over the poor woman—was she to leave it, this still life, and the old house, and the tranquil shade and silence—and for what? Ah, she could not go, she could not—she would stay where she was. Ah! why would they not leave her alone?

Marthe went up to her room and cried, and bathed her eyes and cried again, and dabbed more water to dry her tears; then she came quietly down the old brick stairs. She passed along the tiled gallery, her slim figure reflecting in the dim old looking-glass in the alcove at the end, with the cupids engraved upon its mouldy surface. She hesitated a moment, and then took courage and opened the dining-room door. There was nobody there. It was all empty, dim-panelled, orderly, with its narrow tall windows reflecting the green without, and the gables and chimney-stacks piling under the blue. He was in the drawing-room then; she had hoped to find him here. Marthe sighed and then walked on across the polished floor, and so into the drawing-room. It was dimmer, more chill than the room in which their meals were served. Some one was standing waiting for her in one of the windows. Marthe remembered at that instant that it was Lord John's window, but she had little time for such reminiscences. A burly figure turned at her entrance, and Henry Maynard came to meet her, with one big hand out, and his broad good-natured face beaming.

"Well, Minnie," said Henry Maynard, calling her by his old name for her, "you see I am here again already."

"Yes," she answered, standing before him, and then they were both silent; these two middle-aged people waiting for the other to speak.

"How is your mother?" Maynard asked. "I thought her very little changed, but you are not looking over well. However, time touches us all."

Marthe drew herself up, with her eyes gleaming in her pale face, and then there was another silence. At last Martha faltered out, gaining courage as she went on,

"I have been agitated, and a little disturbed. My mother is quite well, cousin Henry," she said, and as she spoke her sad looks encountered Maynard's good-natured twinkling glance. She blushed suddenly like a girl of fifteen. "You seem amused," she said, with some annoyance.

"Yes, dear," spoke Maynard, in his kind manly tones. "I am amused that you and I, at our time of life, should be shilly-shallying and sentimentalising, like a couple of chits who have all their life before them, and don't care whether they know or not what is coming next. I want to know very much—for I have little time to lose—what do you and your mother think of my letter this morning?"

This was coming to the point very abruptly, Mademoiselle Capuchon thought.

"I am so taken by surprise," Marthe faltered, retreating a step or two, and nervously twisting her apron round about her fingers. "She wishes it. I—I hardly know. I have had so little time to . . ."

"My dear Marthe," said Maynard, impatiently, "I am not a romantic young man. I can make no professions and speeches. You must take me as I am, if I suit you. I won't say that after you sent me away I have never thought of anybody but you during these past fifteen years. But we might have been very happy together all this long time, and yesterday when I saw how hipped you were looking, I determined to try and bring you away with me from this dismal place into the fresh air of Littleton, that is, if you liked to come with me of your own free will, and not only because my aunt desires it." And Henry Maynard drew a long breath, and put his hands in his pockets.

This honest little speech was like a revelation to Marthe. She had come down feeling like a victim, meaning graciously perhaps, in the end, to reward Maynard's constancy, taking it for granted that all this time he had never ceased being in love. She found that it was from old friendship and kindness alone that he had come to her again, not from sentiment, and yet this kindness and protection touched her more than any protestations of romantic affection.

"But—but—should you really like it?" she stammered, forgetting all her dreams, and coming to life, as it were, at that instant.

"Like it," he said, with a smile. "You don't know how fond I mean to be of you, if you will come with me, dear Marthe. You shall make me as happy as you like, and yourself into the bargain. I don't think you will be sorry for it, and indeed you don't seem to have been doing much good here, all by yourself. Well, is it to be yes or no?" And once more Maynard held out the broad brown hand.

And Marthe said "Yes," quite cheerfully, and put her hand into his.

Marthe got to know her future husband better in these five minutes than in all the thirty years which had gone before.

The Maynards are an old Catholic family, so there were no difficulties on the score of religion. The little chapel in the big church was lighted up, the confessor performed the service. Madame Capuchon did not go, but Simonne was there, in robes of splendour, and so were the De la Louvières. The baron and his mother-in-law had agreed to a temporary truce on this auspicious occasion. After the ceremony the new married pair went back to a refection which the English baker and Simonne had concocted between them. The baron and baroness had brought their little son Rémy, to whom they were devoted, and he presented Marthe with a wedding present—a large porcelain vase, upon which was a painting of his mother's performance—in both his parents' name. Madame Capuchon brought out a lovely pearl and emerald necklace, which Félicie had coveted for years past.

"I must get it done up," the old lady said; "you won't want it immediately, Marthe, you shall have it the first time you come to see me." "Do not delay too long," added Madame Capuchon, with a confidential shake of her head, to her son-in-law Maynard, as Marthe went away to change her dress. "You see my health is miserable. I am a perfect martyr. My doctor tells me my case is serious; not in so many words, but he assures me that he cannot find out what ails me, and when doctors say that we all know what it means."

Henry Maynard attempted to reassure Madame Capuchon, and to induce her to take a more hopeful view of her state; but she grew quite angry, and snapped him up so short with her immediate prospect of dissolution, that he desisted in his well-meant endeavours, and the old lady continued more complacently,—

"Do not be uneasy; if anything happens to me Simonne will write directly to your address. Do not forget to leave it with her. And now go and fetch your wife, and let me have the pleasure of seeing her in her travelling dress."

It was a kind old lady, but there was a want in her love; so it seemed to her son-in-law as he obeyed her behest.

Marthe had never quite known what real love was, he thought. Sentiment, yes, and too much of it, but not that best home-love—familiar, tender, unchanging. Her mother had not got it in her to give. Félicie de la Louvière was a hard and clear-headed woman; all her affection was for Rémy, her little boy. Maynard disliked her and the baron too, but they were all apparently very good friends.

Marthe came back to the *salle* to say good-by, looking like herself again Maynard thought, as his bride, in her rippling trailing grey silks, entered the room, with Simonne's big bouquet of roses in her hand, and a pretty pink glow in her cheeks.

She was duly embraced by Félicie and her husband, and then she knelt down to ask for her mother's blessing. "Bless you! bless you!" cried Madame Capuchon, affectionately pushing her away. "There, you will disarrange yourself; take care, take care." Simonne sprang to the rescue, and Marthe found herself all at once embraced, stuck with pins, shaken out, tucked in, flattened, folded, embraced again; the handkerchief with which she had ventured to wipe her tears was torn out of her hand, folded, smoothed, and replaced. "Voilà!" said Simonne, with two last loud kisses, "bon voyage; good luck go with you." And Maynard following after, somewhat to his confusion, received a couple of like salutations.

II.

SIMONNE'S benediction followed Mrs. Maynard to England, where she went and took possession of her new home. The neighbours called; the drawing-room chintzes were renewed; Marthe Capuchon existed on longer; no one would have recognized the listless ghost flitting here

and there, and gazing from the windows of the old house in the Rue de la Lampe, in the busy and practical mistress of Henry Maynard's home. She had gained in composure and spirits and happiness since she came to England. Her house was admirably administered; she wore handsome shining silk dresses and old lace; and she rustled and commanded as efficiently as if she had been married for years. Simonne threw up her hands with delight at the transformation the first time she saw Marthe after her marriage. "But you are a hundred times better-looking than Madame la Baronne," said the old woman. "This is how I like to see you." The chief new blessing and happiness of all those blessings and happinesses which Simonne had wished to Martha Maynard was a blessing called Martha too. It is considered a pretty name in French, and Maynard loved it for his wife's sake, and as time went on for her daughter's as well. He called her Patty, however, to distinguish the two. Far more than the happiness some people find in the early spring, in the voices of birds, the delight of the morning hours, the presence of this little thing brought to her mother, this bright, honest black and brown and white and coral maiden, with her sweet and wilful ways and gay shrill warble. Every year the gay voice became more clear and decided, the ways more pretty and more wilful. Mrs. Maynard used to devise pretty fanciful dresses for her Patty, and to tie bright ribbons in the child's crisp brown locks, and watch over her and pray for her from morning to night. Squire Maynard, who was a sensible man, used to be afraid lest so much affection should be bad for his little girl: he tried to be stern now and then, and certainly succeeded in frightening Patty on such occasions. The truth was he loved his wife tenderly, and thought that Patty made a slave of her mother at times. It was a happy bondage for them both. Marthe dreamt no more dreams now, and only entered that serene country of her youth by proxy, as it were, and to make plans for her Patty. The child grew up as the years went by, but if Martha made plans for her they were very distant ones, and to the mother as impossible still as when Patty had been a little baby tumbling in her cradle. Even then Martha had settled that Patty was not to wait for years, as she had waited. What hero there was in the big world worthy of her darling, Mrs. Maynard did not know. The mother's heart sickened the first time she ever thought seriously of a vague possibility, of which the very notion filled her with alarm. She had a presentiment the first time that she ever saw him.

She was sitting alone in her bedroom, drowsily stitching in the sunlight of the pleasant bow-window, listening to the sound of the clippers at work upon the ivy-hedge close by, and to the distant chime from the clock-tower of the town across the river. Just below her window spread the lawn where her husband's beloved flower-beds were flushing—scarlet and twinkling violet, white and brilliant amber. In the field beyond the sloping lawn some children were pulling at the sweet wild summer garlands hanging in the hedges, and the Alderneys were crunching through the long damp

grasses. Two pretty creatures had straggled down-hill to the water-side, and were looking at their own brown eyes reflected in a chance clear pool in the margin of the river. For the carpet of green and meadow verdure was falling over, and lapping and dragging in the water in a fringe of glistening leaves and insects and weeds. There were white creamy meadow-sweets, great beds of purple flowers, bronzed water docks arching and crisping their stately heads, weeds up-springing, golden, slimy water-lilies floating upon their shining leaves. A water rat was starting out of his hole, a dragon-fly floating along the bank. All this was at the foot of the sloping mead down by the bridge. It crossed the river to the little town of spires and red brick gables which had been built about two centuries ago, and all round about spread hills and lawns and summer corn-fields. Martha Maynard had seen the corn-fields ripen year after year : she loved the place for its own sake, and for the sake of those who were very dear to her then ; but to-day, as she looked, she suddenly realized, poor soul, that a time might come when the heart and the sweetest life of this little home-Eden might go from it. And as she looked through her window, something like a chill came over her : she dropped her work into her lap, and sat watching two figures climbing up the field side by side ; coming through the buttercups, disappearing behind the hedge, reappearing at the bottom of the lawn, and then one figure darted forwards, while the other lingered a little among the flower-beds ; and Mrs. Maynard got up resolutely, with a pain and odd apprehension in her heart, and went down to meet her daughter. The steeples of the little town which strike the hours, half-hours, and the very minutes as they pass, were striking four quarters, and then five again, as Mrs. Maynard came out upon her lawn, and at each stroke the poor mother's heart sank, and she turned a little sick at the possibility which had first occurred to her just now in her own room. It seemed to thrust itself again upon her as she stood waiting for the two young people—her own Patty and the strange young man coming through the flower-beds.

There was a certain likeness to herself, odd, touching, bewildering, in the utter stranger, which said more plainly than any words, I belong to you and yours ; I am no stranger, though strange to you. Patty had no need to explain, all breathless and excited and blushing, "Mamma, do you know who this is ? This is Rémy de la Louvière. Papa and I found him at the hotel," for the poor mother had already guessed that this was her sister's son.

She could not help it. Her greeting was so stiff, her grasp so timid and fluttering, her words so guarded, that M. Rémy, who was used to be cordially welcomed and much made of, was surprised and disappointed, though he said nothing to show it. His manner froze, his mustachios seemed to curl more stiffly. He had expected to like his aunt from her letters and from what he had seen of her daughter, and she was just the same as anybody else after all. In the meantime Rémy was introducing himself. He had come to make acquaintance with his

English relations, he told Mrs. Maynard. His mother "sent her love, and would they be kind to him?" Martha, for all her presentiments, could not but relent towards the handsome young fellow; she did not, however, ask him to stay, but this precaution was needless, for her husband had done so already. "We heard him asking for us at the inn," explained Patty. "Mamma, was not it fortunate? Papa was talking about the old brown mare, and I was just walking with Don in the court-yard, and then I heard my cousin saying, 'Where is Sunnymede?' and I said, 'Oh, how delightful!'"

"Hush, darling," said her mother. "Go and tell them to bring us some tea on the lawn."

There was a shady corner not too far from the geraniums, where the table was set, and Rémy liked his aunt a little better, as she attended to his wants, making a gentle clatter among the white cups, and serving out cream strawberries with liberal hand, unlike anything he was used to at home. Mr. Maynard came in, hot, grizzled, and tired, and sank into a garden-chair; his wife's face brightened as he nodded to her; the distant river was flashing and dazzling. Rémy, with his long nose and bright eyes, sat watching the little home scene, and envying them somewhat the harmony and plenty. There was love in his home, it is true, and food too, but niggardly dealt out and only produced on occasions. If this was English life, Rémy thought it was very pleasant, and as he thought so, he saw the bright and splendid little figure of his cousin Patty advancing radiant across the lawn. For once Mrs. Maynard was almost angry with her daughter for looking so lovely; her shrill sweet voice clamoured for attention; her bright head went bobbing over the cake and the strawberries; her bright cheeks were glowing; her eyes seemed to dance, shine, speak, go to sleep, and wake again with a flash. Mrs. Maynard had tied a bright ribbon in her daughter's hair that morning. She wore a white dress like her mother, but all fancifully and prettily cut. As he looked at her, the young man thought at first,—unworthy simile,—of coffee and cream and strawberries, in a dazzle of sunlight; then he thought of a gipsy, and then of a nymph, shining, transfigured: a wood-nymph escaped from her tree in the forest, for a time consorting with mortals, and eating and joining in their sports, before she fled back to the ivy-grown trunk, which was her home, perhaps.

Mrs. Maynard, frowning slightly, had asked for the second time whether he had seen his grandmother lately, before Rémy, with some little confusion, came back to his senses again. "No, not very lately; not for some time," said he. While Patty cried out, "I want a nice large piece of cake, mamma; this is such a good cake. Have you given Rémy some?"

"Rémy!" her mother looked it rather than said it.

"Yes, dear," said Patty, nothing abashed. "You always called papa Henry, I know, and he wasn't really your cousin. We want to go out on the river in a boat after dinner, please, dearest mamma; and we will get

some lilies and feed the swans. A little more cream, please mamma, and some sugar."

Rémy had not lived all these years in the narrow home school in which he had been bred without learning something of the lesson which was taught there. Taught in the whole manner and being of the household, of its incomings and outgoings, of its interests and selfish preoccupations. We are all sensible, coming from outside into strange homes, of the different spirit or lares penates pervading each household. As surely as every tree in the forest has its sylph, so every house in the city must own its domestic deity,—different in aspect and character, but ruling with irresistible decision,—orderly and decorous, disorderly; patient, impatient; some stint and mean in contrivances and economies, others profuse and neglectful; others, again, poor, plain of necessity, but kindly and liberal. Some spirits keep the doors of their homes wide open, others ajar, others under lock and key, bolted, barred, with a little cautious peephole to reconnoitre from. As a rule, the very wide open door often invites you to an indifferent entertainment going on within; and people who are particular generally prefer those houses where the door is left, let us say, on the latch.

The household god that Rémy had been brought up to worship was a mean, self-seeking, cautious, and economical spirit. Madame de la Louvière's object and ambition in life had been to bring her servants down to the well-known straw a day; to persuade her husband (no difficult matter) to grasp at every chance and shadow of advantage along his path; to educate her son to believe in the creed which she professed. Rémy must make a good marriage; must keep up with desirable acquaintances; must not neglect his well-to-do uncle, the La Louvière in Burgundy; must occasionally visit his grandmother, Madame Capuchon, whose savings ought to be something considerable by this time. Madame de la Louvière had no idea how considerable these savings were until one day about a week before Rémy made his appearance at Littleton, when the family lawyer, Monsieur Micotton, had come over to see her on business. This grasping clear-headed woman exercised a strange authority and fascination over the stupid little attorney,—he did her business cheaper than for any other client; he told her all sorts of secrets he had no right to communicate,—and now he let out to her that her mother had been making her will, and had left everything that she had laid by, in trust for little Marthe Maynard, her elder daughter's only child.

Madame de la Louvière's face pinched and wrinkled up into a sort of struggling knot of horror, severity, and indignation.

"My good Monsieur Micotton, what news you give me! What a culpable partiality. What an injustice; what a horror. Ah, that little intriguing English girl! Did you not remonstrate with, implore, my unfortunate mother? But it must not be allowed. We must interfere."

"Madame," said Micotton, respectfully, "your mother is, as you well know, a person of singular decision and promptness of character. She

explained to me that when your sister married, her husband (who apparently is rich) refused to accept more than a portion of the dot which came by right to madame your sister. M. de la Louvière unfortunately at that moment requested some advance, which apparently vexed madame your mother, and——”

“Ah, I understand. It was a plot; it was a conspiracy. I see it all,” hissed the angry lady. “Ah, Monsieur Micotton, what a life of anxiety is that of a mother, devoted as I have been, wounded cruelly to the heart; at every hour insulted, trampled on!”

Madame de la Louvière was getting quite wild in her retrospect; and M. Micotton, fearing a nervous attack, hastily gathered his papers together, stuffed them into his shabby bag, and making a great many little parting bows, that were intended to soothe and calm down his angry client, retreated towards the door. As he left he ran up against a tall, broad-shouldered, good-looking young man, with a long nose, quick dark eyes, and a close-cropped dark beard, thick and soft and bright. Rémy had a look of his mother, who was a tall, straight, well-built woman; but his forehead was broader, his face softer, and his smile was charming. It was like the smile of his unknown aunt, far away in England, the enemy who had, according to his mother's account, defrauded and robbed him of his rights.

“My son, my poor child!” said the baroness excitedly, “be calm, come and help me to unravel this plot.”

“What is the matter?” Rémy asked in a cheerful voice. He, however, shrugged his shoulders rather dolefully when he heard the news, for to tell the truth he was in debt, and had been counting upon his grandmother's legacy to help him out. “Hadn't we better make sure of her intentions before we remonstrate?” he suggested, and the baron was accordingly sent for and desired to copy out another of those long letters of his wife's devising, which he signed with a flourish at the end.

Madame Capuchon appealed to, refused to give any information as to the final disposition of her property. She should leave it to anybody she liked. She thought, considering her state of health, that the baron might have waited in patience until she was gone to satisfy his curiosity. She sent her love to her grandson, but was much displeased with both his parents.

This was a terrible climax. Madame de la Louvière lay awake all one night. Next morning she sent for Rémy and unfolded her plans to him.

“You must go over to England and marry your cousin,” she said, decisively; “that is the only thing to be done.”

When Micotton came next day for further orders, Madame de la Louvière told him that Rémy was already gone.

All his life long Rémy remembered this evening upon the river, sweeter, more balmy and wonderful than almost any evening he had ever spent in his life before. He had come with a set purpose, this wolf in

sheep's clothing, to perform his part in a bargain, without thought of anything but his own advantage. The idea of any objection being made never occurred to him. He was used to be made much of, as I have said; he could please where he chose. This project accorded so entirely with his French ideas, and seemed so natural and simple an arrangement, that he never thought of doubting its success. For the first time now a possibility occurred to him of something higher, wiser, holier, than money getting and grasping, in his schemes for the future and for his married life. He scarcely owned it to himself, but now that he had seen his cousin, he unconsciously realized that if he had not already come with the set purpose of marrying her, he should undoubtedly have lost his heart to this winsome and brilliant little creature. All that evening, as they slid through the water, paddling between the twilight fields, pushing through the beds of water-lilies, sometimes spurting swiftly through the rustling reeds, with the gorgeous banks on either side, and the sunset beyond the hills, and the figures strolling tranquilly along the meadows, De la Louvière only felt himself drifting and drifting into a new and wonderful world. This time-wise young fellow felt as if he was being washed white and happy and peaceful in the lovely purple river. Everything was at once twilit, moonlit, and sunlit. The water flowed deep and clear. Patty, with a bulrush wand, sat at the stern, bending forward and talking happily; the people on the shore heard her sweet chatter.

Once Patty uttered a cry of alarm. "Don! Where was Don?" He had been very contentedly following them, trotting along the bank; but now in the twilight they could not make him out. Patty called and her father halloed, and Rémy pulled out a little silver whistle he happened to have in his pocket and whistled shrilly. Old Don, who had been a little ahead, hearing all this hullabaloo, quietly plashed from the banks into the water, and came swimming up to the side of the boat, with his honest old nose in the air and his ears floating on the little ripples. Having satisfied them of his safety and tried to wag his tail in the water, he swam back to shore again, and the boat sped on its way home through the twilight.

"What a nice little whistle," said Patty.

"Do take it," said Rémy. "It is what I call my dogs at home with. Please take it. It will give me pleasure to think that anything of mine is used by you."

"Oh, thank you," said Patty, as she put out her soft warm hand through the cool twilight and took it from him. Maynard was looking out for the lock and paying no attention. Rémy felt as glad as if some great good-fortune had happened to him.

The light was burning in the drawing-room when they got back. Mrs. Maynard had ordered some coffee to be ready for them, and was waiting with a somewhat anxious face for their return.

"Oh, mamma, it has been so heavenly," said Patty, once more sinking into her own corner by the window.

And then the moon came brightly hanging in the sky, and a nightingale began to sing. Rémy had never been so happy in his life before. He had forgotten all about his speculation, and was only thinking that his English cousin was more charming than all his grandmother's money-bags piled in a heap. For that night he forgot his part of wolf altogether.

In the morning, Patty took her cousin to the greenhouse, to the stable to see her pony; she did the honours of Sunnymede with so much gaiety and frankness that her mother had not the heart to put conscious thoughts into the child's head, and let her go her own way. The two came back late to the early dinner; Mr. Maynard frowned, he disliked unpunctuality. Rémy was too happy to see darkness anywhere, or frowns in anybody's face, but then his eyes were dazzled. It was too good to last, he thought, and in truth a storm was rising even then.

During dinner, the post came in. Mrs. Maynard glanced at her correspondence, and then at her husband, as she put it into her pocket. "It is from my mother," she said. Rémy looked a little interested, but asked no questions, and went on talking and laughing with his cousin; and after dinner, when Mrs. Maynard took her letter away to read in the study, the two young people went and sat upon the little terrace in front of the house.

The letter was from Madame Capuchon, and Mrs. Maynard having read it, put it into her husband's hands with a little exclamation of bewildered dismay.

"What is the matter, my dear?" said Maynard, looking up from his paper, which had come by the same afternoon post.

"Only read this," she said; "you will know best what to do. Oh, Henry, he must go; he should never have come."

My heroine's mother was never very remarkable for spirit: her nearest approach to it was this first obstinate adherence to anything which Henry might decree. Like other weak people she knew that if she once changed her mind she was lost, and accordingly she clung to it in the smallest decisions of life with an imploring persistence: poor Marthe, her decision was a straw in a great sea of unknown possibilities. Madame Capuchon was a strong-minded woman, and not afraid to change her mind.

"I have heard from Félicie," the old lady wrote; "but she says nothing of a certain fine scheme which I hasten to acquaint you with. I learnt it by chance the other day when Micotton was with me consulting on the subject of my will, which it seems has given great offence to the De la Louvières. Considering the precarious state of my health, they might surely have taken patience; but I am now determined that they shall not benefit by one farthing that I possess. Micotton, at my desire, confessed that Rémy has gone over to England for the express purpose of making advances to Martha, your daughter, in hopes of eventually benefiting through me. He is a young man of indifferent character, and he inherits, no doubt, the covetous and grasping spirit of his father." Mr. Maynard read no farther; he flushed

up, and began to hiss out certain harmless oaths between his teeth. "Does that confounded young puppy think my Patty is to be disposed of like a bundle of hay? Does he come here scheming after that poor old woman's money? Be hanged to the fellow; he must be told to go about his business, Marthe, or the child may be taking a fancy to him. Confound the impertinent jackanapes."

"But who is to tell him?" poor Marthe faltered, with one more dismal presentiment.

"You, to be sure," said Maynard, clapping on his felt hat and marching right away off the premises.

In the meantime Rémy and his cousin had been very busy making Don jump backwards and forwards over the low parapet. They had a little disappointed conversation between the jumping.

"What is your home like?" Patty asked once.

"I wish it was more like yours," said Rémy, with some expression; "it would make me very happy to think that, some day, it might become more so."

The girl seemed almost to understand his meaning, for she blushed and laughed, and tossed her gloves up in the air, and caught them again. "I love my home dearly," said she.

At that moment the garden door opened, and Mr. Maynard appeared, but instead of coming towards them, he no sooner saw the two young folks than he began walking straight away in the direction of the outer gate, never turning his head or paying any attention to the young folks.

"Papa, papa!" cried Patty, springing up; but her father walked on, never heeding, and yet she was sure he must have heard. What could it mean? She looked at Rémy, who was quite unconscious, twirling his moustache, and stirring up Don with the toe of his boot; from Rémy she looked round to the library window, which was open wide, and where her mother was standing.

"Do you want me?" Patty cried, running up.

"Ask your cousin to come and speak to me," said Mrs. Maynard, very gravely—"here, in papa's room."

Patty was certain that something was wrong. She gave Rémy her mother's message with a wistful glance to see whether he did not suspect any trouble. The young man started up obediently, and Patty waited outside in the sun, listening to the voices droning away within, watching the sparkle of the distant river, lazily following the flight of a big bumble-bee,—wondering when their talk would be over and Rémy would come out to her again. From where she sat Patty could see the reflection of the two talkers in the big sloping looking-glass over the library table. Her mother was standing very dignified and stately, the young man had drawn himself straight up—so straight, so grim and fierce-looking, that Patty, as she looked, was surer and more sure that all was not right; and she saw her mother give him a letter, and he seemed to push it away. And then it was not Rémy but Mrs. Maynard who came out, looking very pale and

who said, "Patty, darling, I have been very much pained. Your cousin has behaved so strangely and unkindly to you and me and to your father, that we can never forget or forgive it. Your father says so."

Mrs. Maynard had tried to perform her task as gently as she could. She told Rémy that English people had different views on many subjects from the French; that she had learnt his intentions from her mother, and thought it best to tell him plainly at once that she and Mr. Maynard could never consent to any such arrangement; and under the circumstances—that—that—that—

"You can never consent," repeated the young man, stepping forward and looking through her and round about her, seeing all her doubts, all her presentiments, reading the letter, overhearing her conversation with her husband all in one instant—so it seemed to poor Marthe. "And why not, pray?"

"We cannot argue the question," his aunt said, with some dignity. "You must not attempt to see my daughter any more."

"You mean to say that you are turning me, your sister's son, out of your house," the indignant Rémy said. "I own to all that you accuse me of. I hoped to marry your daughter. I still hope it; and I shall do so still," cried the young man.

Rémy's real genuine admiration for Patty stood him in little stead; he was angry and lost his temper in his great disappointment and surprise. He behaved badly and foolishly.

"I had not meant to turn you out of my house," said his aunt gravely; "but for the present I think you had certainly better go. I cannot expose my daughter to any agitation."

"You have said more than enough," said Rémy. "I am going this instant." And as he spoke he went striding out of the room.

And so Rémy came back no more to sit with Patty under the ash-tree; but her mother, with her grave face, stood before her, and began telling her this impossible, unbelievable fact;—that he was young, that he had been to blame.

"He unkind! he to blame! Oh, mamma," the girl said, in a voice of reproach.

"He has been unkind and scheming, and he was rude to me, darling. I am sorry, but it is a fact." And Martha as she spoke glanced a little anxiously at Patty, who had changed colour, and then at De la Louvière himself, who was marching up, fierce still and pale, with bristling hair—his nose looking hooked and his lips parting in a sort of scornful way. He was carrying his cloak on his arm.

"I have come to wish you good-by, and to thank you for your English hospitality, madame," said he, with a grand sweeping bow. "My cousin, have you not got a word for me?"

But Mrs. Maynard's eyes were upon her, and Patty, with a sudden shy stiffness for which she hated herself then and for many and many a day and night after, said good-by, looking down with a sinking heart, and Rémy

marched away with rage and scorn in his. "They are all alike; not one bit better than myself. That little girl has neither kindness, nor feeling, nor fidelity in her. The money: they want to keep it for themselves—that is the meaning of all these fine speeches. I should like to get hold of her all the same, little stony-hearted flirt, just to spite them; yes, and throw her over at the last moment, money and all—impertinent, ill-bred folks." And it happened that just at this minute Mr. Maynard was coming back thoughtfully the way he had gone, and the two men stopped face to face, one red, the other pale. Mrs. Maynard, seeing the meeting, came hastily up.

"You will be glad to hear that I am going," said Rémy, defiantly looking at his uncle as he had done at his aunt.

"I am very glad to hear it," said Mr. Maynard. "I have no words to express the indignation which fills me at the thought of your making a speculation of my daughter's affections, and the sooner you are gone the better."

"Hush, dear," said Mrs. Maynard, laying her hand on her husband's arm, and looking at Patty, who had followed her at a little distance. She had had her own say, and was beginning to think poor Rémy hardly dealt with.

"Let him say what he likes, madame, I don't care," De la Louvière said. "I am certainly going. You have failed, both of you, in kindness and hospitality; as for my cousin——;" but looking at Patty, he saw that her eyes were full of tears, and he stopped short. "I am all that you think," Rémy went on. "I am in debt, I have lost money at gambling, I am a good-for-nothing fellow. You might have made something of me, all of you, but you are a sordid nation and don't understand the feelings of a French gentleman."

With this bravado Rémy finally stalked off.

"I think, perhaps, we were a little hasty," said the injudicious Martha, while Patty suddenly burst out crying and ran away.

Poor little Patty came down to tea that evening looking very pale, with pouting red lips, prettier than ever, her mother thought, as she silently gave the child her cupful of tea and cut her bread-and-butter, and put liberal helpings of jam and fruit before her, dainties that were served in the old cut-glass dishes that had sparkled on Maynard's grandmother's tea table before. The old Queen Anne teapot, too, was an heirloom, and the urn and the pretty straight spoons, and the hideous old china tea-set with the red and yellow flowers. There were other heirlooms in the family, and even Patty's bright eyes had been her great-grandmother's a century ago, as anybody might see who looked at the picture on the wall. Mr. Maynard was silent; he had been angry with his wife for her gentle remonstrance, furious with the young man for the high hand in which he had carried matters, displeased with Patty for crying, and with himself for not having foreseen the turn things were taking: and he now sat sulkily stirring his tea—sulky but relenting—and not indisposed for peace. After all he had had his own way, and that is a wonderful calming process. Rémy was

gone; nothing left of him but a silver whistle that Patty had put away in her work-table drawer. He was gone; the echo of his last angry words were dinning in Maynard's ears, while a psalm of relief was sounding in the mother's heart. Patty sulked like her father, and ate her bread-and-jam without speaking a word. There was no great harm done, Mrs. Maynard thought, as she kept her daughter supplied. She herself had been so disturbed and overcome by the stormy events of the day that she could not eat. She made the mistake that many elders have made before her: they mistake physical for mental disturbance; poor well-backed bodies that have been jolted, shaken, patched, and mended, and strained in half-a-dozen places, are easily affected by the passing jars of the moment: they suffer and lose their appetite, and get aches directly which take away much sense of the mental inquietude which brought the disturbance about. Young healthy creatures like Patty can eat a good dinner and feel a keen pang and hide it, and chatter on scarcely conscious of their own heroism.

But as the days went by Mrs. Maynard suspected that all was not well with the child; there seemed to be a little effort and strain in the life which had seemed so easy and smooth before. More than once, Mrs. Maynard noticed her daughter's eyes fixed upon her curiously and wistfully. One day the mother asked her why she looked at her so. Patty blushed but did not answer. The truth was, it was the likeness to her cousin which she was studying. These blushes and silence made Martha Maynard a little uneasy.

But more days passed, and the mother's anxious heart was relieved. Patty had brightened up again, and looked like herself, coming and going in her Undine-like way, bringing home long wreaths of ivy, birds' eggs, sylvan treasures. She was out in all weathers. Her locks only curled the crisper for the falling rain, and her cheeks only brightened when the damp rose up from the river. The time came for their annual visit to Madame de Capuchon. Patty, out in her woods and meadows, wondered and wondered what might come of it; but Poitiers is a long way from Fontainebleau, "fortunately," "alas!" thought the mother—in her room, packing Patty's treasures—and the daughter out in the open field in the same breath. They were so used to one another these two, that some sort of magnetic current passed between them at times, and certainly Martha never thought of Rémy de la Louvière that Patty did not think of him too.

III.

OLD MADAME DE CAPUCHON was delighted with her grand-daughter, and the improvement she found in her since the year before. She made more of her than she had ever done of Marthe her daughter. All manner of relics were produced out of the old lady's ancient stores to adorn Miss Patty's crisp locks, and little round white throat and wrists; small medallions were hung round her neck, brooches and laces pinned on, ribbons

tied and muslins measured, while Simonne tried her hand once again at cake-making. Patty, in return, brought a great rush of youth, and liberty, and sunshine into the old closed house, where she was spoilt, worshipped, petted, to her heart's content. Her mother's tender speechless love seemed dimmed and put out by this chorus of compliments and admiration. "Take care of your complexion; whatever you do, take care of your complexion," her grandmother was always saying. Madame Capuchon actually sent for the first modiste in the town, explained what she wanted, and ordered a scarlet "capeline"—such as ladies wear by the sea-side—a pretty frilled, quilted, laced, and braided scarlet hood, close round the cheeks and tied up to the chin, to protect her grand-daughter's youthful bloom from the scorching rays of the sun. She need not have been so anxious. Patty's roses were of a damask that does not fade in the sun's rays.

Squire Maynard, who was a sensible man, did not approve of all this to do, and thought it was all very bad for Miss Patty, "whose little head was quite full enough of nonsense already," he said. One day Patty came home with the celebrated pearls round her neck, that Madame de la Louvière had tried so hard to get. Madame Capuchon forgot that she had already given them to Marthe, but Mrs. Maynard herself was the last to have remembered this, and it was her husband who said to her, with a shrug of the shoulders—

"It is all very well, but they are yours, my dear, and your mother has no more right to them than Patty has."

Patty pouted, flashed, tossed her little head, flung her arms round her mother's neck, all in an instant. She was a tender-hearted little person, heedless, impulsive, both for the best and the worst, as her poor mother knew to her cost. The squire thought his wife spoilt her daughter, and occasionally tried a course of judicious severity, and, as I have already said, he had only succeeded in frightening the child more than he had any idea of.

"Take them, dear mamma," said Patty, pulling off her necklace. "I didn't know anything about them. Grandmamma tied them on."

"Darling," said her mother, "you are my jewel. I don't want these pearls: and if they are mine, I give them to you."

Two pearl drops were in Mrs. Maynard's eyes as she spoke. She was thinking of her long lonely days, and of the treasures which were now hers. Looking at this bright face in its scarlet hood—this gay, youthful presence standing before them all undimmed, in the splendour of its confidence and brightness—it seemed to Mrs. Maynard as if now, in her old age, now that she had even forgotten her longings for them, all the good things were granted to her, the want of which had made her early life so sad. It was like a miracle, that at fifty all this should come to her. Her meek glad eyes sought her husband's. He was frowning, and eyeing his little girl uneasily.

"I don't like that red bonnet of yours," said he. "It is too conspicuous. You can't walk about Paris in that."

"Paris!" shrieked Patty. "Am I going to Paris, papa?"

"You must take great care of your father, Patty," said her mother.

"I shall stay here with my mother until you come back."

I am not going to describe Patty's delights and surprise. Everybody has seen through her eyes, at one time or another, and knows what it is to be sixteen, and transported into a dazzling ringing world of sounds, and sights, and tastes, and revelations. The good father took his daughter to dine off delicious little dishes with sauces, with white bread and butter to eat in between the courses; he hired little carriages, in which they sped through the blazing streets, and were set down at the doors of museums and palaces, and the gates of cool gardens, where fountains murmured and music played; he had some friends in Paris—a good-natured old couple, who volunteered to take charge of his girl; but for that whole, happy, unspeakable week he rarely left her. One night he took her to the play—a grand fairy piece—where a fustian peasant maiden was turned into a satin princess in a flash of music and electric light. Patty took her father's arm, and came away with the crowd, with the vision of those waving halos of bliss opening and shining with golden rain and silver-garbed nymphs, and shrieks of music and admiration, all singing and turning before her. The satin princess was already re-transformed, but that was no affair of Patty's. Some one in the crowd, better used to plays and fairy pieces, coming along behind the father and daughter, thought that by far the prettiest sight he had seen that night was this lovely eager little face before him, and that those two dark eyes—now flashing, now silent—were the most beautiful illuminations he had witnessed for many a day. The bright eyes never discovered who it was behind her. Need I say that it was Rémy, who, after looking for them for a couple of days in all the most likely places, took a ticket for Fontainebleau on the third evening after he had seen them. What fascination was it that attracted him? He was hurt and angry with her, he loved and he longed to see her. Sometimes vague thoughts of revenge crossed his mind: he would see her and win her affections, and then turn away and leave her, and pay back the affront which had been put upon him. M. Rémy, curling his mustachios in the railway-carriage, and meditating this admirable scheme, was no very pleasant object to contemplate.

"That gentleman in the corner looks ready to eat us all up," whispered a little bride to her husband.

Meanwhile Patty had been going on her way very placidly all these three days, running hither and thither, driving in the forest, dining with her grandmother, coming home at night under the stars. The little red hood was well known in the place. Sometimes escorted by Betty, an English maid who had come over with the family; oftener Mr. Maynard himself walked with his daughter. Fontainebleau was not Littleton, and he did not like her going about alone, although Patty used to pout and rebel at these precautions. Mrs. Maynard herself rarely walked; she used to drive over to her mother's of an afternoon, and her husband

and daughter would follow her later ; and Simonne, radiant, would then superintend the preparation of fricandeaus and galettes, such as she loved to set before them, and cream tarts and chicken and *vol au vent*. There was no end to her resources. And yet to hear Madame Capuchon, one would think that she led the life of an invalid ascetic starving on a desert island. "These railways carry away everything," the old lady would say ; "they leave one nothing. When I say that I have dined, it is for the sake of saying so. You know I am not particular, but they leave us nothing, absolutely nothing, to eat." On this especial occasion the old lady was in a state of pathetic indignation over M. Bougu, her butterman, who had been taken up for false practices. Simonne joined in,— "I went in for the tray," she said. "Oh, I saw at once, by the expression of madame's face, that there was something wrong. It was lard that he had mixed with his butter. As it is, I do not know where to go to find her anything fit to eat. They keep cows at the hotel," she added, turning to Marthe as she set down a great dish full of cream-cakes upon the table. "Perhaps they would supply us, if you asked them."

Mrs. Maynard undertook the negotiation ; and next day she called Patty to her into the little drawing-room, and gave the child a piece of honeycomb and a little pat in a vine-leaf, to take to Madame Capuchon, as a sample. "Give her my love, and tell her she can have as much more as she likes ; and call Betty to go with you," said Mrs. Maynard. "Tell Betty to follow me," said Patty, dancing off delighted with her commission. Betty followed ; but there are two roads to Madame Capuchon's, one by the street and one by the park. Patty certainly waited for three minutes, but Betty never came ; she was trudging down the town, and gaping into all the shops as she went along, while her young mistress had escaped into the park, and was hurrying along the avenues, delighted to be free—hurrying and then stopping, as the fancy took her. The sun shone, the golden water quivered, the swans came sailing by. It was all Patty could do not to sing right out and dance to her own singing. By degrees her spirits quieted down a little.

Patty was standing leaning over the stone-parapet at the end of the terrace, and looking deep down into the water which laps against it. A shoal of carp was passing through the clear cool depths. Solemn patriarchs, bald, dim with age, bleared and faded and overgrown with strange mosses and lichens, terrible with their chill life of centuries, solemnly sliding, followed by their court through the clear cool waters where they had floated for ages past. Unconscious, living, indifferent while the generations were succeeding one another, and angry multitudes surging and yelling while kingdoms changed hands ; while the gay court ladies, scattering crumbs with their dainty fingers, were hooted by the hags and furies of the Revolution, shrieking for bread and for blood for their children :—The carps may have dived for safety into the cool depths of the basins while these awful ghosts of want and madness clamoured round the doors of the palace,—ghosts that have not passed away for

ever, alas ! with the powders and patches, and the stately well-bred follies of the court of Dives. After these times a new order of things was established, and the carps may have seen a new race of spirits in the quaint garb and odd affectation of a bygone age, of senates and consuls and a dead Roman people ; and then an Emperor, broken-hearted, signed away an empire, and a Waterloo was fought ; and to-day began to dawn, and the sun shone for a while upon the kingly dignity of Orleans ; and then upon a second empire, with flags and many eagles and bees to decorate the whole, and trumpets blowing and looms at work and a temple raised to the new goddess of industry.

What did it all matter to the old grey carp ? They had been fed by kings and by emperors ; and now they were snatching as eagerly at the crumbs which Patty Maynard was dropping one by one into the water, and which floated pleasantly into their great open maws. The little bits of bread tasted much alike from wherever they came. If Patty had been used to put such vague speculations into words, she might have wondered sometimes whether we human carps, snatching at the crumbs which fall upon the waters of life, are not also greedy and unconscious of the wonders and changes that may be going on close at hand in another element to which we do not belong, but at which we guess now and then.

A crumb fell to little Patty herself, just then gazing down deep into the water. The sun began to shine hot and yet more hot, and the child put up her big white umbrella, for her hood did not shade her eyes. A great magnificent stream of light illumined the grand old place, and the waving tree-tops, and the still currentless lake. The fish floated on basking, the birds in the trees seemed suddenly silenced by the intense beautiful radiance, the old palace courts gleamed bravely, the shadows shrank and blackened, hot, sweet, and silent the light streamed upon the great green arches and courts and colonnades of the palace of garden without, upon the arches and courts and colonnades of the palace of marble within, with its quaint eaves and mullions, its lilies of France and D's and H's still entwined, though D and H had been parted for three centuries and more. It was so sweet and so serene, that Patty began to think of her cousin. She could not have told you why fine days put her in mind of him, and of that happy hour in the boat ; and to-day she could not help it, she pulled the little silver whistle out of her pocket, and instead of pushing the thought of Rémy away, as she had done valiantly of late, the silly child turned the whistle in her hands round and round again. It gleamed in the sun like a whistle of fire ; and then slowly she put it to her lips. Should she frighten the carp ? Patty wondered ; and as she blew a very sweet long note upon the shrill gleaming toy, it echoed oddly in the stillness, and across the water. The carp did not seem to hear it ; but Patty stopped short, frightened, ashamed, with burning blushes, for, looking up at the sound of a footstep striking across the stone terrace, she saw her cousin coming towards her.

To people who are in love each meeting is a new miracle. This was

an odd chance certainly, a quaint freak of fortune. The child thought it was some incantation that she had unconsciously performed; she sprang back, her dark eyes flashed, the silver whistle fell to the ground and went rolling and rolling, and bobbing across the stones to the young man's feet.

He picked it up and came forward with an amused and lover-like smile, holding it out in his hand. "I have only just heard you were here," he said; "I came to see my grandmother last night, from Paris. My dear cousin, what a delightful chance. Are not you a little bit glad to see me?" said the young man, romantically. It was a shame to play off his airs and graces upon such a simple downright soul as Martha Maynard. Some one should have boxed his ears as he stood there smiling, handsome, irresistible, trying to make a sentimental scene out of a chance meeting. Poor little Patty, with all her courage and simpleness, was no match for him at first; she looked up at his face wistfully and then turned away, for one burning blush succeeded to another, and then she took courage again. "Of course I am glad to see you, cousin Rémy," said she brightly, and she held out her little brown hand and put it frankly into his. "It is the greatest pleasure and delight to me, above all now when I had given up all hopes for ever; but it's no use," said Patty with a sigh, "for I know I mustn't talk to you, they wouldn't like it. I must never whistle again upon the little whistle, for fear you should appear," she said with a sigh.

This was no cold-hearted maiden. Rémy forgot his vague schemes of revenge and desertion, the moment he heard the sound of her dear little voice. "They wouldn't like it," said Rémy, reddening, "and I have been longing and wearying to see you again Patty. What do you suppose I have come here for?—Patty, Patty, confess that you were thinking of me when you whistled," and as he said this the wolf's whole heart melted. "Do you know how often I have thought of you since I was cruelly driven away from your house?"

Two great, ashamed, vexed, sorrowful tears, startled into Martha's eyes as she turned away her head and pulled away her hand.

"Oh, Rémy, indeed, indeed there must have been some reason, some mistake: dear papa, if you knew how he loves me and mamma, and, oh, how miserable it made me."

"I daresay there was some mistake, since you say so," said the wily wolf. "Patty, only say you love me a little, and I will forgive everything and anything."

"I mustn't let any one talk about forgiving *them*," said the girl. "I would love you a great deal if I might," she added with another sigh. "I do love you, only I try not to, and I think,—I am sure, I shall get over it in time if I can only be brave."

This was such an astounding confession that De la Louvière hardly knew how to take it; touched and amused and amazed, he stood there, looking at the honest little sweet face. Patty's confession was a very honest one. The girl knew that it was not to be; she was loyal to her

father, and, above all, to that tender, wistful mother. Filial devotion seemed like the bright eyes and silver tea-pot to be an inheritance in her family. She did not deceive herself; she knew that she loved her cousin with something more than cousinly affection, but she also believed that it was a fancy which could be conquered. "We are human beings," said Patty, like St. Paul; "we are not machines; we can do what we will with ourselves, if we only determine to try. And I will try." And she set her teeth and looked quite fierce at Rémy; and then she melted again, and said in her childish way, "You never told me you would come if I blew upon the whistle."

Do her harm,—wound her,—punish her parents by stabbing this tender little heart? Rémy said to himself that he had rather cut off his mustachios.

There was something loyal, honest, and tender in the little thing, that touched him inexpressibly. He suddenly began to tell himself that he agreed with his uncle that to try to marry Patty for money's sake had been a shame and a sin. He had been a fool and a madman, and blind and deaf. Rémy de la Louvière was only half a wolf after all,—a sheep in wolf's clothing. He had worn the skin so long that he had begun to think it was his very own, and he was perfectly amazed and surprised to find such a soft, tender place beneath it.

It was with quite a different look and tone from the romantic, impassioned, corsair manner in which he had begun, that he said very gently, "Dear Patty, don't try too hard not to like me. I cannot help hoping that all will be well. You will hope too, will you not?"

"Yes, indeed, I will," said Patty; "and now, Rémy, you must go: I have talked to you long enough. See, this is the back gate and the way to the Rue de la Lampe." For they had been walking on all this time and following the course of the avenue. One or two people passing by looked kindly at the handsome young couple strolling in the sunshine; a man in a blouse, wheeling a hand-truck, looked over his shoulder a second time as he turned down the turning to the Rue de la Lampe. Patty did not see him, she was absorbed in one great resolution. She must go now, and say good-by to her cousin.

"Come a little way farther with me," said Rémy, "just a little way under the trees. Patty, I have a confession to make to you. You will hate me, perhaps, and yet I cannot help telling you."

"Oh, indeed I must not come now," Patty said. "Good-by, good-by."

"You won't listen to me, then?" said the young man; so sadly, that she had not the courage to leave him, and she turned at last, and walked a few steps.

"Will you let me carry your basket?" said her cousin. "Who are you taking this to?"

"It is for my grandmother," said the girl, resisting. "Rémy, have you really anything to say?"

They had come to the end of the park, where its gates lead into the forest; one road led to the Rue de la Lampe, the other into the great waving world of trees. It was a lovely summer's afternoon. There was a host in the air, delighting and basking in the golden comfort; butterflies, midges, flights of birds from the forest were passing. It was pleasant to exist in such a place and hour, to walk by Rémy on the soft springing turf, and to listen to the sound of his voice under the shade of the overarching boughs.

"Patty, do you know I did want to marry you for your money?" Rémy said at last. "I love you truly; but I have not loved you always as I ought to have done—as I do now. You scorn me, you cannot forgive me?" he added, as the girl stopped short. "You will never trust me again."

"Oh Rémy, how could you . . . Oh, yes, indeed, indeed I do forgive you. I do trust you," she added quickly, saying anything to comfort and cheer him when he looked so unhappy. Every moment took them farther and farther on. The little person with the pretty red hood and bright eyes and the little basket had almost forgotten her commission, her conscience, her grandmother, and all the other duties of life. Rémy, too, had forgotten everything but the bright sweet little face, the red hood, and the little hand holding the basket, when they came to a dark, enclosed halting-place at the end of the avenue, from whence a few rocky steps led out upon a sudden hillside, which looked out into the open world. It was a lovely surprising sight, a burst of open country, a great purple amphitheatre of rocks shining and hills spreading to meet the skies, clefts and sudden gleams, and a wide distant horizon of waving forest fringing the valley. Clouds were drifting and tints changing, the heather springing between the rocks at their feet, and the thousands of tree-tops swaying like a ripple on a sea.

Something in the great wide freshness of the place brought Patty to herself again.

"How lovely it is," she said. "Oh, Rémy, why did you let me come? Oh, I oughtn't to have come."

Rémy tried to comfort her. "We have not been very long," he said. "We will take the short cut through the trees, and you shall tell your mother all about it. There's no more reason why we shouldn't walk together now than when we were at Littleton."

As he was speaking he was leading the way through the brushwood, and they got into a cross avenue leading back to the carriage-road.

"I shall come to Madame Capuchon's, too, since you are going," said Rémy, making a grand resolution. "I think perhaps she will help us. She is bound to, since she did all the mischief;" and then he went on a few steps, holding back the trees that grew in Patty's way. A little field-mouse peeped at them and ran away, a lightning sheet of light flashed through the green and changing leaves, little blue flowers were twinkling on the mosses under the trees, dried blossoms were falling, and cones and dead leaves and aromatic twigs and shoots.

"Is this the way?" said Patty, suddenly stopping short, and looking about her. "Remy, look at those arrows cut in the trees; they are not pointing to the road we have come. Oh, Remy, do not lose the way," cried Patty, in a sudden fright.

"Don't be afraid," Remy answered, laughing, and hurrying on before her; and then he stopped short, and began to pull at his mustache, looking first in one direction, and then in another. "Do you think they would be anxious if you were a little late?" he said.

"Anxious," cried Patty. "Mamma would die; she could not bear it. Oh, Remy, Remy, what shall I do?" She flushed up, and almost began to cry. "Oh, find the way, please. Do you see any more arrows? Here is one; come, come."

Patty turned, and began to retrace her steps, hurrying along in a fever of terror and remorse. The wood-pigeons cooed overhead, the long lines of distant trees were mingling and twisting in a sort of dance, as she flew along.

"Wait for me, Patty," cried Remy. "Here is some one to ask." And as he spoke he pointed to an old woman coming along one of the narrow cross pathways, carrying a tray of sweetmeats and a great jar of lemonade.

"Fontainebleau, my little gentleman?" said the old woman. "You are turning your back upon it. The arrows point away from Fontainebleau, and not towards the town. Do you know the big cross near the gate? Well, it is just at the end of that long avenue. Wait, wait, my little gentleman. Won't you buy a sweet sugarstick for the pretty little lady in the red hood? Believe me, she is fond of sugarsticks. It is not the first time that she has bought some of mine."

But Remy knew that Patty was in no mood for barley-sugar, and he went off to cheer up his cousin with the good news. The old woman hobbled off grumbling.

It was getting later by this time. The shadows were changing, and a western light was beginning to glow upon the many stems and quivering branches of the great waving forest. Everything glowed in unwearied change and beauty, but they had admired enough. A bird was singing high above over their heads, they walked on quickly in silence for half an hour or more, and at the end of the avenue—as the old woman had told them—they found a wide stony ascending road, with the dark murmuring fringe of the woods on either side, and a great cross at the summit of the ascent. Here Patty sank down for a minute, almost falling upon the step, and feeling safe. This gate was close to the Rue de la Lampe.

"Now go," she said to her cousin. "Go on first, and I will follow, dear Remy. I don't want to be seen with you any more. People know me and my red hood."

De la Louvière could only hope that Patty had not already been recognized.

All the same he refused utterly to leave her until they reached the gates of the forest; then he took the short way to the Rue de la Lampe, and Patty followed slowly. She had had a shock, she wanted to be calm

before she saw her grandmother. Her heart was beating still, she was tired and sorry. Patty's conscience was not easy—she felt she had done wrong, and yet—and yet—with the world of love in her heart it seemed as if nothing could be wrong and nobody angry or anxious.

Mrs. Maynard herself had felt something of the sort that afternoon after the little girl had left her. The mother watched her across the court-yard, and then sat down as usual to her work. Her eyes filled up with grateful tears as she bent over her sewing; they often did when Henry spoke a kind word or Patty looked specially happy. Yes, it was a miracle that at fifty all this should come to her, thought Marthe Maynard—brilliant beauty and courage and happiness, and the delight of youth and of early hopes unrepressed. It was like a miracle that all this had come to her in a dearer and happier form than if it had been given to herself. Marthe wondered whether all her share had been reserved for her darling in some mysterious fashion, and so she went on stitching her thoughts to her canvas as people do; peaceful, tranquil, happy thoughts they were, as she sat waiting for her husband's return. An hour or two went by, people came and went in the court-yard below, the little diligence rattled off to the railway; at last, thinking she heard Henry's voice, Marthe leant out of the window and saw him speaking to an old woman with a basket of sweetmeats, and then she heard the sitting-room door open, and she looked round to see who it was coming in. It was Simonne, who came bustling in with a troubled look, like ripples in a placid smooth pool. The good old creature had put on a shawl and gloves and a clean cap with huge frills, and stood silent, umbrella in hand, and staring at the calm-looking lady at her work-table.

"What is it?" said Marthe, looking up. "Simonne, is my mother unwell?"

"Madame is quite well; do not be uneasy," said Simonne, with a quick, uncertain glance in Mrs. Maynard's face.

"Have you brought me back Patty?" said Mrs. Maynard. "Has Betty come with you?"

"Betty? I don't know where she is," said Simonne. "She is a craze-pated girl, and you should not allow her to take charge of Patty."

Mrs. Maynard smiled. She knew Simonne's ways of old. All cooks, housekeepers, ladies'-maids, &c. under fifty were crazy-pated girls with Simonne, whose sympathies certainly did not rest among her own class. Mrs. Maynard's smile, however, changed away when she looked at Simonne a second time.

"I am sure something is the matter," Marthe cried, starting up. "Where's Patty?" The poor mother suddenly conjecturing evil had turned quite pale, and all the soft contentment and calm were gone in one instant. She seized Simonne's arm with an imploring nervous clutch, as if praying that it might be nothing dreadful.

"Don't be uneasy, madame," said Simonne. "Girls are girls, and that Betty is too scatterbrained to be trusted another time: she missed Patty

and came alone to our house. Oh, I sent her off quickly enough to meet Mademoiselle. But you see, Madame," Simonne was hurrying on nervously over her words, "our Patty is so young, she thinks of no harm, she runs here and there just as fancy takes her, but a young girl must not be talked of, and—and it does not do for her to be seen alone in company with anybody but her mother or father. There's no harm done, but——"

"What are you talking of—why do you frighten me for nothing, Simonne?" said Mrs. Maynard, recovering crossly with a faint gasp of relief, and thinking all was well. She had expected a broken limb at the least in her sudden alarm.

"There, Marthe," said Simonne, taking her hand, "you must not be angry with me. It was the concierge de chez nous, who made a remark which displeased me, and I thought I had best come straight to you."

"My Patty, my Patty! What have you been doing, Simonne? How dare you talk of my child to common people!" said the anxious mother.

"I was anxious, Madame," said poor Simonne, humbly. "I looked for her up the street and along the great avenue, and our concierge met me and said, 'Don't trouble yourself. I met your young lady going towards the forest in company with a young man.' She is a naughty child, and I was vexed, Madame, that is all," said Simonne.

But Mrs. Maynard hardly heard her to the end,—she put up her two hands with a little cry of anxious horror. "And is she not back? What have you been doing? why did you not come before? My Patty, my Patty! what absurd mistake is this? Oh, where is my husband? Papa, papa!" cried poor Mrs. Maynard distracted, running out upon the landing. Mr. Maynard was coming upstairs at that instant, followed by the blowsy and breathless Betty.

Mr. Maynard had evidently heard the whole story: he looked black and white, as people do who are terribly disturbed and annoyed. Had they been at home in England, Patty's disappearance would have seemed nothing to them; there were half-a-dozen young cousins and neighbours to whose care she might have been trusted, but here, where they knew no one, it was inexplicable, and no wonder they were disquieted and shocked. Mr. Maynard tried to reassure his wife, and vented his anxiety in wrath upon the luckless Betty.

Martha sickened as she listened to Betty's sobs and excuses. "I can't help it," said the stupid girl with a scared face. "Miss Patty didn't wait for me. The old woman says she saw a red hood in the forest, going along with a young man,—master heard her."

"Hold your tongue, you fool. How dare you all come to me with such lies!" shouted Maynard. He hated the sight of the girl ever after, and he rushed down into the court again. The old woman was gone, but a carriage was standing there waiting to be engaged.

"We may as well go and fetch Patty at your mother's," Maynard called out with some appearance of calmness. "I daresay she is there by this time." Mrs. Maynard ran downstairs and got in, Simonne

bundled in too, and sat with her back to the horses. But that ten minutes' drive was so horrible that not one of them ever spoke of it again.

They need not have been so miserable, poor people, if they had only known Patty had safely reached her grandmother's door by that time. When the concierge, who was sitting on his barrow at the door, let her in and looked at her with an odd expression in his face, "Simonne was in a great anxiety about you, Mademoiselle," said he; "she is not yet come in. Your grandmamma is upstairs as usual. Have you had a pleasant walk?"

Patty made no answer; she ran upstairs quickly. "I must not stay long," she said to herself. "I wonder if Rémy is there." The front door was open, and she went in, and then along the passage, and with a beating heart she stopped and knocked at her grandmother's door. "Come in, child," the old lady called out from the inside; and as Patty nervously fumbled at the handle, the voice inside added, "Lift up the latch, and the hasp will fall. Come in," and Patty went in as she was told.

It was getting to be a little dark indoors by this time, and the room seemed to Patty full of an odd dazzle of light—perhaps because the glass door of the dressing closet, in which many of Madame Capuchon's stores were kept, was open.

"Come here, child," said her grandmother, hoarsely, "and let me look at you."

"How hoarsely you speak," said Patty; "I'm afraid your cold is very bad, grandmamma."

The old lady grunted and shook her head. "My health is miserable at all times," she said. "What is that you have got in your basket? butter, is it not, by the smell?"

"What a good nose you have, grandmamma," said Patty, laughing, and opening her basket. "I have brought you a little pat of butter and some honeycomb, with mamma's love," said Patty. "They will supply you from the hotel, if you like, at the same price you pay now."

"Thank you, child," said Madame Capuchon. "Come a little closer and let me look at you. Why, what is the matter? You are all sorts of colours,—blue, green, red. What have you been doing, Miss? See if you can find my spectacles on that table."

"What do you want them for, grandmamma?" Patty asked, fumbling about among all the various little odds and ends.

"The better to see you, my dear, and anybody else who may call upon me," said the grandmamma, in her odd broken English. Patty was nervous still and confused, longing to ask whether Rémy had made his appearance, and not daring to speak his name first, and in her confusion she knocked over a little odd-shaped box that was upon the table, and it opened and something fell out.

"Be careful, child! What have you done?" said the old lady sharply. "Here, give the things to me."

"It's—it's something made of ivory, grandmamma," said stupid Patty, looking up bewildered. "What is it for?"

"Take care; take care. Those are my teeth, child. I cannot eat comfortably without them," said the old lady pettishly. "And now I want to talk seriously. Here, give me your hand, and look me in the face, and tell me honestly what you think of a certain . . . ?"

But at that instant a loud ring at the bell was heard, and voices in the passage; the door of the room flew open, and Mrs. Maynard rushed in, burst into a flood of tears, and clasped her daughter to her beating heart.

"I tell you she is here, monsieur," Simonne was saying to Maynard himself, who was following his wife. As soon as he saw her there, with Patty in her arms, "Now, Martha," he said, "you will at last believe what a goose you are at times," and he began to laugh in a superior sort of fashion, and then he choked oddly, and sat down with his face hidden in his hands.

"But what is it all about?" asked Madame Capuchon, from her bed.

Poor people! They could hardly own or tell or speak the thought which had been in their minds, so horrible and so absurd as it now seemed. They tried to pass it over; and, indeed, they never owned to one another what that ten minutes' drive had been.

It was all over now, and Patty, in penitent tears, was confessing what had detained her. They could not be angry at such a time, they could only clasp her in their loving arms. All the little miniatures were looking on from their hooks on the wall, the old grandmother was shaking her frills in excitement, and nodding and blinking encouragement from her alcove.

"Look here, Henry," said she to her son-in-law. "I have seen the young man, and I think he is a very fine young fellow. In fact, he is now waiting in the dining-room, for I sent him away when I heard *la petite* coming. I wanted to talk to her alone. Félicie has written to me on the subject of their union; he wishes it, I wish it, Patty wishes it; oh, I can read little girls' faces: he has been called to the bar; my property will remain undivided; why do you oppose their marriage? I cannot conceive what objection you can ever have had to it."

"What objection!" said the squire, astounded. "Why, you yourself warned me. Félicie writes as usual with an eye to her own interest—a grasping, covetous——"

"Hush, hush, dear," interceded Mrs. Maynard, gently pushing her husband towards the door. The old lady's hands and frills were trembling more and more by this time; she was not used to being thwarted; the squire also was accustomed to have his own way.

"My Félicie, my poor child, I cannot suffer her to be spoken of in this way," cried Madame Capuchon, who at another time would have been the first to complain.

"Patty is only sixteen," hazarded Mrs. Maynard.

"I was sixteen when I married," said Madame Capuchon.

"Patty shall wait till she is sixty-six before I give her to a penniless adventurer," cried the squire in great wrath.

"Very well," said the old lady, spitefully. "Now I will tell you what

I have told him. As I tell you, he came to see me just now, and is at this moment, I believe, devouring the remains of the pie Simonne prepared for your luncheon. I have told him that he shall be my heir whether you give him Patty or not. I am not joking, Henry, I mean it. I like the young man exceedingly. He is an extremely well-bred young fellow, and will do us all credit."

Maynard shrugged his shoulders and looked at his wife.

"But, child, do you really care for him?" Patty's mother said reproachfully. "What can you know of him?" and she took both the little hands in hers.

Little Patty hung her head for a minute. "Oh, mamma, he has told me everything; he told me he did think of the money at first, but only before he knew me. Dear papa, if you talked to him you would believe him, indeed you would—indeed, indeed you would." Patty's imploring wistful glance touched the squire, and as she said, Maynard could not help believing in Rémy when he came to talk things over quietly with him, and without losing his temper.

He found him in the dining-room, with a bottle of wine and the empty pie-dish before him; the young man had finished off everything but the bones and the cork and the bottle. "I had no breakfast, sir," said Rémy, starting up, half laughing, half ashamed. "My grandmother told me to look in the cupboard."

"Such a good appetite should imply a good conscience," Maynard thought; and at last he relented, and eventually grew to be very fond of his son-in-law.

Patty and Rémy were married on her seventeenth birthday. I first saw them in the court-yard of the hôtel, but afterwards at Sunnymede, where they spent last summer.

Madame Capuchon is not yet satisfied with the butter. It is a very difficult thing to get anywhere good. Simonne is as devoted as ever, and tries hard to satisfy her mistress.

A Gossip on our Rosalinds.

As You Like It is one of the many plays of Shakspeare that suffered much at the hands of the Shakspeare-tinkers, of which class Charles Johnson was one. He was a man whose career was of considerable variety. Like a number of other young fellows who had commenced life as a student of law, he took to reading plays instead of Coke upon Littelton, to going to the theatres in Lincoln's Inn Fields and Drury Lane instead of to the law courts. Any day he might be seen abroad with Sir Harry Wildair, or what is the same thing, Mr. Wilks—the latter all airiness and fine-gentlemanism—towards whom many a bright eye was directed, as the handsome actor passed along the causeway or under the piazza, while many a smile greeted him as his slight but sweet Irish accent was recognized in his lofty-toned conversations with his stout friend. Charles Johnson had an alacrity in growing fat: he begun at an early period, and never left off till he died. Wilks breathed him pretty freely, but Charles panted heavily, yet happily, as he kept up with his lighter-heeled and swifter-going friend. His admiration for Wilks was unbounded, and the graceful player repaid the homage by helping to bring on the stage about a score of Johnson's plays. These were all more or less popular in their day. They all belong to the earlier part of the last century, and are all wrapped in wholesome oblivion now; but, in their time, they made a celebrity of their author, and as he went into Will's or Button's, or looked out of the window upstairs, a poet or a player at his side, the street-public gazed at the group with interest. At that period every man of note was known to the great body of the unknown, for London was not larger than Manchester is now, and in certain quarters of the town the same faces were to be seen every day.

Johnson, like most fat men, was a good-natured fellow. His worst enemies could not say more in his disparagement than that he might have been thinner. His popularity was manifested by the crowds that always attended the theatre on his benefit—the “author's nights,” as they used to be called—and his audiences were inclined to look on his writing as something not far off the free style of Etherege, the easy vein of Sedley, the brilliancy of Congreve, or the epigrammatic humour of Wycherley. They took a certain ease and vivacity for proofs of wit. They forgot that Johnson was merely an adapter of other men's ideas, while, at the same time they were fain to confess that his tragedies only escaped being comedies because they were too dull to raise a laugh.

It is a curious social trait of those old times, not that this coffee-house gallant married a young widow with a fortune, but that he ceased to be a gallant at all. He who had taken his punch, his chocolate, or his claret,

with the old bards and young beaux, the clever, idle, fine, witty, witless, or scampish gentlemen, who fluttered, talked, and settled the reputation of ministers, authors, poets, players, and toasts of the town, over their liquor, now took to serving customers of his own, in the character of a Boniface. With his wife's fortune, Johnson opened a tavern, or succeeded to one of the old ones in Bow Street. With his apron on and a scratch wig on his head, he could see his old fellows, the gallants, in cataract *perruques* and swords on their hips, going jauntily by to the resort of such dainty personages. But these sometimes made a night of it at "Charley's;" for Bow Street was then not a century old, and Covent Garden Theatre and the police office, as yet, were not. Gentry from the country had their lodgings in this street during their sojourn in town, and great poets, and fashionable physicians, and famous players dwelt there, and Wilks himself lived next door to his friend, and thought none the worse of him for selling good wine and not objecting to long scores. When Johnson's wife died, the widower retired from business with great increase of fortune, and lived in very easy circumstances ever after.

Well, this dramatic author, who began life with an intention, on his father's part at least, that he should become a Lord Chancellor, and who ended it by being a retired tapster of considerable fortune, would hardly, perhaps, be remembered now at all but for having come under the scornful notice of Pope in the *Dunciad*, and for having been one of the most audacious of the Shakspeare-tinkers who re-wrote Shakspeare's plays, in the style in which they considered *he* ought to have written them, if he had had any regard for his own reputation.

Johnson took up a well-thumbed volume of Shakspeare's works that lay on an arm-chair in the little parlour behind the bar at Will's, on one wet morning, and he opened it at *As You Like It*. The rain without, and inclination within, enabled him to read it through with great interest; but when he closed the book, it was with something of the feeling of the sign-painter, who, after executing a *red lion*, thought of the jealous feelings with which Titian would have regarded it, and exclaimed, good-naturedly, "Poor little Titty!" Johnson held the volume in his hand, and shook his head. The play was good, but he thought it might have been better. Hitherto, *As You Like It* had been looked upon as something too finely exquisite for the stage: as partaking more of a poem than of a play. Rosalind was a part that neither Mrs. Betterton, Mrs. Barry, Mrs. Bracegirdle, Mrs. Mountfort, Mrs. Oldfield, or any of that brilliant sisterhood, had ever ventured to attempt. There was nothing like Rosalind in any of the heroines of the modern comedy of the day. These heroines were hussies of the most audacious and intrepid character; women with none of the attributes of true, pure, womanly nature about them; and Rosalind was even thought too purely colourless a character for it to be likely to be popular with audiences accustomed to the obscenity which contemporary playwrights forced upon them against their wills, and tried to persuade a disgusted public that they liked it.

Johnson addressed himself thus to his work of improving Shakspeare. He began with the title, drew his pen through *As You Like It*, and wrote, *Love in a Forest*. Coming upon the *dramatis persona*, he scored out some of them with the savageness of a democrat who has the opportunity of proscribing his friends who do not share his political opinions. We perhaps might have pardoned him for erasing William, Corin, Phœbe, and Sylvius, but *never* for expelling Touchstone and Audrey from Shakspeare's roll. To turn them out was a great sacrilege; but there seems to have been an idea prevalent (when the coarsest expressions and the most revolting indecency were considered as fitting things to challenge the public taste withal) that the philosophy of Shakspeare's fools and clowns was too offensive or unintelligible to be presented to a British public. Thus for years the tender, faithful, loving, and beloved fool in *Lear* was banished from the stage. Even so accomplished a dramatist as Colman could not discern the beauty, poetry, and suggestiveness of that incomparable bit of fantastic nature. He pronounced it "intolerable," a character that no audience would bear for an instant on the stage!

Equally wonderful was Garrick's insurmountable aversion to the grave-diggers in *Hamlet*. They had charmed many a generation, but they charmed not Roscius, and as long as he played the heir of Denmark, the grave-diggers, with the philosophy of the one and the simplicity of the other, were conspicuous only by their absence. Garrick opposed every suggestion for their restoration, and he died firm in the faith that to bring the grave-diggers on the stage would be to desecrate all the passion and philosophy of the tragedy. *Anathema maranatha* was his legacy to all who might dare to restore our ancient friends to their rightful position. But Garrick pronounced much of the fifth act of *Hamlet* to be "rubbish," and he wished, as Tillotson did of the Athanasian Creed, that we were "well rid of it!" He was influenced a little by Voltairian reasoning, and perhaps by the fact that *Hamlet* is not so exclusively paramount before the audience as in the preceding acts. Laertes may be said to have almost the best of it; and Charles Kemble knew well how to make the most of that best, in those great days of his when he played such capital secondary parts as Laertes, Falconbridge, Macduff, and similar characters, demanding for their fitting interpretation true actors—men of intelligence and earnestness.

Let us, however, gossip back to Charles Johnson, who, after altering the title and ejecting several of the persons of the drama, proceeded to improve *As You Like It* after his fashion; and a very droll fashion it was!—just as if he had improved his own wine-cellar by mixing his claret with his champagne, and pouring his rum into his Rhenish. Johnson put some of the speeches of the characters he had left out into the mouths of others of the characters he had preserved. Then some lines in *Richard the Second* striking him as fine, he transferred them into his first act, and he was so pleased with the effect that he looked for more good things, and finding what he looked for in *Much Ado About Nothing*,

he clapped it all into his third act. In the fourth there are some gems from *Twelfth Night*; Viola does duty for Rosalind, and the last scene of the original play is fitted in here, whether it will or no! Into the fifth act is inserted much from the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, including all the mock play of "Pyramus and Thisbe." The pretty, saucy, pleasant epilogue is omitted altogether.

Wilks looked at this "hash," and did not object to it. He was to play Orlando himself, he said, and he *did*, having for the first Rosalind on record as played by a woman, Mrs. Booth, the "Santlow, famed for dance," of Gay. Wonderful woman she was, with her dash of aristocratic beauty, and her all-conquering ways, and her supreme love for her husband; in token of which, and to indicate her enduring sorrow thirty years after his death, this first of our Rosalinds erected the tablet to his memory in Westminster Abbey, which still exists, but which, through dust, damp, and darkness, can now be deciphered only with difficulty. It was "better late than never!" Barton Booth himself acted no higher part in the play than the banished duke, while Cibber was the Jacques; and his son Theophilus (destined never to be hanged) daintily played M. Le Beau, and made a pretty "bit" of it.

A handsomer pair than the Orlando and Rosalind who presented themselves on the stage of Drury Lane, on the 9th of January, 1723, the stage could not then supply. How they acted is nowhere on record; but Wilks's Orlando must have lacked no grace the part demanded; and Mrs. Booth's Rosalind was, in all probability, marked by more sauciness than passionate feeling in sentiment or expression. One thing is certain, that the public did not take to the piece kindly, and that they manifested a desire to have Shakspeare's original play, and not Johnson's mangling of three or four, to make an imperfect medley out of one perfect whole.

Whence came this English Rosalind no biography can tell. She first took the town by storm as a dancer. Terpsichore herself seemed to have visited earth in the person of Hester Santlow, one of whose great points in the ballet was to let her clustered auburn hair suddenly loose over a pair of lustrous shoulders that carried the hearts of the whole house upon them. She was so full of fascination that even Marlborough would have given her gold for a smile; and Craggs, a cold Secretary of State, *did* give her a house, where he was master and she was mistress. The daughter of that equivocal household married (successively) into the families of Hamilton and Eliot, whereby the present Marquis of Abercorn and Earl of St. German's are representatives or descendants of the earliest of our English Rosalinds, who left the ballet for comedy, but who was hardly equal to the exigencies of Shakspearean dramas. Yet her gifts were many; she had a soft, sweet voice, a refined aspect, and much intelligence, but she who originated, with such marked success the part of Dorcas Zeal left no mark in Rosalind. It was easier to wear a modest dress, observe a "reserved decency of gesture," and manifest great simplicity of sentiment, than to fulfil the exigencies presented in

Rosalind. An actress with intelligence may be made to understand what those exigencies are, but an actress of intellect will discover them and supply all they may demand.

And the next Rosalind was exactly a player of that quality, though she commenced her career by acting at Southwark and other fairs, as indeed many noble comedians of her time had done. Her name, in that earlier time, was Miss Vaughan, but she is better known by her married name of Mrs. Pritchard. The stage had to wait for Shakspeare's *As You Like It* till 1741. At that period the above-named actress, not yet famous, was of a slim figure, moderately fair, as Cowley says of the mistress he imagined, of wonderfully expressive eyes, with easy carriage, elegant manners, and last but not least, a clear and harmonious articulation. When Covent Garden put Shakspeare's play on the stage in 1741, this young creature had not had much experience in that highest walk of the drama. She had, however, acted Ophelia, a part which Mrs. Cibber made exclusively her own, and which no actress ever illustrated as that great artist did. On the other hand, the stage had never seen a truly Shakspearian Rosalind till now, and the charming Mrs. Pritchard, by her interpretation of the part, first showed her claims to be Queen of Comedy, as her Lady Macbeth did to her being Queen of Tragedy. It may be reasonably doubted whether even Mrs. Siddons ever approached Mrs. Pritchard in Rosalind, or excelled her in Lady Macbeth.

Drury Lane could think of no one to oppose to the Rosalind of the other house till Margaret Woffington suggested herself to the managers. Margaret, like Mrs. Pritchard, had played Ophelia in the country, but Rosalind was her first serious attempt at Shakspeare, in London. Her training had not been of the best quality; her Irish birth was of the humblest, and she had begun life in Dublin by hanging to the legs of a rope-dancer, Madame Violante, as the latter went through her "astounding performances." Mrs. Woffington was so thoroughly a lady in manner, speech, bearing, in grace, and in expression, that many have doubted whether she *could* have been of such very humble origin, and such degraded companionship, as her biographers assign to her. The fact is that the lady was innate in Margaret. It was in her from the first, even when she carried water on her head from the Liffey to her neighbouring obscure home. That, in spite of her uncultivated youth, she should have had all the graces of a true lady (that is, all save one, lacking which it must be confessed, the others are much tarnished) has nothing remarkable in it. Look at young French actresses; some of them come from homes humbler than Margaret's, if that can be, but they play patched and powdered marchionesses with an ease, an aplomb, and a general manner, as if they had been born into the peerage, and never had companionship save with what was refined and noble.

For about fifteen years, this untaught but well-inspired Irish girl was the popular Rosalind; and yet she lacked one of the great requisites for a perfect interpretation of the character—a sweet voice. But Margaret was

a woman of unbounded resolution, and she even brought her voice, just as a great singer with a refractory organ can do, under such control that she could make it sound like a silver bell. In fact, she was one of those real artists who never believe that they are such great proficient but that they have something more to learn; and it is the looking for such enlightenment that *keeps* them great artists. Betterton's Hamlet was the grandest of all Hamlets for half a century, and chiefly for this reason, that the most accomplished of English players never ceased to study the character.

Margaret Woffington and Mrs. Pritchard were equally unendowed by education; but both were *earnest* actresses and apt at comprehending their authors. Therefore, they were sure of success, though it might be of different degrees. They divided the town as to the merits of their respective Rosalinds; but Margaret's air and remarkable beauty helped to give her the superiority, notwithstanding that Mrs. Pritchard carried triumph in her voice. Garrick, of course, brought Mrs. Woffington out as Rosalind. This was in 1747, the first year of his proprietorship at Drury Lane. She was not, however, well supported, save that Kitty Clive played Celia and Macklin, Touchstone. The receipts on her first night only reached 99*l.* 8*s.*, the lowest sum received on a Shakspeare night; and it is worthy of remark that the receipts of that season never exceeded 200*l.*, except when a play by Shakspeare was performed, and that *King Lear* drew the largest house, one paying into the treasury 208*l.* In that season of 1747-8, consisting of 171 nights, the receipts amounted to 21,044*l.* 15*s.*, the expenses averaging only 60*l.* a night.

Mrs. Woffington had held Rosalind as her own for ten years, when, on the 3rd of May, 1757, she put on the dress for the last time. She was then at Covent Garden. Some prophetic feeling of ill came over her as she struggled against a fainting-fit while assuming the bridal-dress in the last act. She had never disappointed an audience in her life; her indomitable courage carried her on the stage, and the audience might have taken her to be as radiant in health and spirits as she looked. She began the pretty saucy prologue with her old saucy prettiness of manner; but when she had said,—“If I were among you, I would kiss as many of you as had beards that pleased me——” she paused, tried to-articulate, but was unable, had consciousness enough to know how she was stricken, and to manifest her terror at the catastrophe by a wild shriek, as she tottered towards the stage-door. On her way, she fell, paralysed, into the arms of sympathizing comrades, who bore her from the stage, to which she never returned. Three years of dying followed, and then passed away the woman whom her play-fellows loved for her magnificent kindliness of heart; the public esteemed her for her rare merits. Even bishops, it is said, forgot her errors in the excellence of her tea and the brilliancy of her conversation; and the poor of Teddington, where this Rosalind died, profit at this moment by the active and abiding charity of Margaret Woffington.

The little “Barbara S——,” of the well-known essay by Elia, was the

next Rosalind whom the town accepted. The town knew nothing of Miss Street, the Bath apothecary's daughter, or of her early struggle for life and a position on the stage. She first appeared as Mrs. Dancer; and when she assumed Rosalind, in 1767, the critics of Old Drury pronounced her emphatically *good*. In one respect, they thought her superior to Pritchard or Woffington, having, as they said, "a more characteristic person;" and the phrase is significant, if not happy. She played the part to the Orlando of that plausible Palmer, who once persuaded a bailiff who had him in custody, to lend him a guinea. When, eight years later, she played the part to the airy Orlando of restless Lewis, the Jaques was Spranger Barry, the second of the three husbands of Charles Lamb's "*Barbara S—*." Her last left her to the stage as Mrs. Crawford, whose Lady Randolph was so magnificent a piece of acting that young Mrs. Siddons wished her elder sister in art—comfortably in Paradise.

Till Mrs. Siddons herself played Rosalind, in 1785, at Drury Lane, no other had much attracted the town. Mrs. Bulkeley had resplendent beauty and unparalleled audaciousness; but Rosalind requires a lady in mind, taste, and bearing to ensure success; and Mrs. Bulkeley's Rosalind, in the last century, was, probably, like Mrs. Nesbitt's in this, too glowing by half. Such Rosalinds are to Shakspeare's as Voltaire's Pucelle is to the genuine Maid of Orleans. Miss Younge, when she first played the character, in 1779, or ten years later, as Mrs. Pope, did not offend in this way. She rather offended in an opposite way, and was, through fear of being too loving, altogether too cold. Miss Younge, however, who was Garrick's last and favourite pupil, was not without ardour. In her *mature* years, she took young Mr. Pope and married him. Many a joke was fired at them, and Mrs. Siddons *would* have hers—to the effect that the bridegroom would be the only boy that would come of *that* marriage.

In 1785, Mrs. Siddons herself tried Rosalind. Melpomene, it is said, looked ill in the guise of Thalia. She was so scrupulously modest as to wear male attire in the forest, such as no male or female had ever donned. It belonged to neither sex, and her Rosalind, in like manner, belonged to neither comedy nor tragedy. It needs archness, and of *that*, Charles Young declared it had not a particle, though it "*wanted neither playfulness nor feminine softness.*" The execution fell short of the conception. Colman, indeed, said rudely of Mrs. Siddons' attempts out of tragedy, that she looked, on such occasions, "*like Gog in petticoats*;" and, no doubt, when Mrs. Jordan appeared in 1787 at Drury Lane, as Rosalind to the Orlando of John Kemble, Mrs. Siddons felt that her own attempt in 1785 was a mistake.

Mrs. Jordan, however, came as near it in Rosalind as could well be. There was none other like her down to the end of the last century, and none who have thoroughly possessed themselves of the character in this, except perhaps Ellen Tree, but certainly Miss Helen Faucit and the young Mrs. Scott Siddons. The interpretations of the latter two ladies

are wide apart, thoroughly original. They preserve throughout, the woman, —the *lady*, if you will—in all their illustrations.

Mrs. Jordan brought laughter, vivacity, and abounding spirit to the task ; but because she was inimitable as Nell or incomparable as the Romp, it is not necessary to conclude that she brought in addition the manners of either of those lively personages. Mrs. Jordan had heart and *tact*, impulses and judgment to control them. Doubtless, her Rosalind was as different from that of Miss Helen Faucit or Mrs. Scott Siddons as the Rosalind of either of these ladies is unlike that of the other. Nothing can manifest more study, more excellent method, more delicate conception, more artistic execution than the Rosalind of both ladies, and yet they are altogether different. Miss Faucit's is a Rosalind that takes the serious side of the character : the doubts and fears predominate. She has anxious rather than tender aspirations. Her hopes are timidly rather than boldly conceived, and there is no assurance in her that all will end well. There is some dread, amid much playfulness, that all may come to an ill end. Mrs. Scott Siddons's Rosalind is of a different complexion altogether. She has, in the first place, that which her great-grandmother lacked,—archness;—and yet her face has much of the feature and expression of her tragic ancestress, with whom archness was the last trait of character she could assume. The new Rosalind is a Rosalind full of courage. She has not only hope but confidence ; love and a resolve to be loved. From the very first, with the chain she gives Orlando, you see that she binds him to her, herself to him, for good and aye ! Clouds may come and she will sit in their shade, but she knows that there is a silver lining behind them. Death may threaten, and she may tremble a little, but "*odds her little life*," there is to be, after trial, much enjoyment before that debt is paid ; meanwhile, her heart defies all obstacles that may stand between her and the triumph of her love. The study to produce what appeared so unstudied, so natural and so artless, must have been great, but the young actress is repaid by her success.

Saint and Sinner.

Ah, reverend sir, she has departed
 To a realm more holy and single-hearted !
 Draw the shroud from her face and gaze on her :
 She looks alive with the red sun's rays on her.

Her hands are clasped on her bosom saintly,
 Her cold red lips seem fluttering faintly ;
 So silent, with never a stain of sin on her,
 That the light seems awed as it creepeth in on her.

Why do you shudder, reverend sir, so ?
 Your prayers and counsels, hallowing her so,
 The sins of the flesh took, night and day, from her—
 Cover her up and come away from her.

Nay, sit a little and talk below here,
 The breath can come, the blood can flow here.
 Ah, sainted sir, your conversation
 In a time so sore is a consolation.

Was she not fashion'd in holy mould, sir,
 A shining light in your blessed fold, sir ?
 Took she not comfort and peace and grace with her,
 And—shall I not meet in a better place with her ?

If, after death, in the time of waking,
 When the Trump is sounding, the new dawn breaking,
 We met, do you think my saint would rush away,
 Avoid me, fear me, fly with a blush away ?

Must the gentle souls that have loved and plighted
 And married below be above united ?
 Is there a meeting and never a parting there ?
 Are old wrongs burning and old wounds smarting there ?

Ah, reverend sir, you perceive so clearly
 What racks poor sinners like me severely—
 Pardon the silly fears which vex me so,
 Expound the points which in life perplex me so.

For every Sunday that softly passes,
The scented, silken middle classes
Flutter their flounces and, good lack ! are in
Joy at your feet, good Mr. Saccharine.

Cambric handkerchiefs scatter scent about,
Pomaded heads are devoutly bent about ;
Silks are rustling, lips are muttering,
In the pastor's emotional pausing and fluttering.

What wonder that she who is far from here now,
Singing your tunes in another sphere now,
Became so saintly that earth grew vague to her,
Her sinning husband a clog and a plague to her ?

And yearning for Love and the faith and the trust of it,
Hating the flesh (she had wed) and the lust of it,
Stole to the sheepfold, blushing and throbbing there,
Then fell on the breast of the shepherd, sobbing there !

Why do you turn so pale and look at me,
Casting the wrath of the blessed Book at me ? . . .
Ah, reverend sir, be calm and stay with me,
I wander . . . my fancies run quite away with me.

Yet how can I thank you as you merit
For the light you shed on her blessed spirit—
For the consolations and balmy blisses, too,
She found on your lips, and their cold chaste kisses too ?

You covered her eyes with white hands blessing ;
You hid her blush with your pure caressing,
And shut out earth and the fears that wait on it,—
The Sinner's face and the white-heat hate on it.

And I, the Sinner, to my degradation,
Dared to begrudge you her conversation :
Envied her love for the heaven you offer'd her,
Hated your face and the peace it proffer'd her !

Alas the folly, alas the blindness !
I did not bless you for your kindness !
But only cried with a heart the sternest then—
Best she should go to heaven in earnest then !

For at night she lay with soft lips fluttering,
Dreaming of angels and faintly muttering,
And once or twice stirr'd in sleep, and alone to me,
Mentioned the name of an angel well known to me.

That angel stands high in the estimation
Of your silken and scented congregation ;
And she murmured his name with her heart throbbing faint in her,
With a little more than the warmth of a saint in her !

And, sinner and slave that I am, I hated
A passion so holy and elevated :
And knowing her longing from earth to upspring away,
I poison'd the flesh—that the sweet soul might wing away.

And because, sir, I knew of your longing to fly, too,
My first thought was darkly, that you, sir, should die, too ;
But I envied you death and the peace that doth dwell in it,
And kept you for earth and the hate and the hell in it.

I kept you for slower, intenser dying,
Than the sleep in whose bosom that lamb is lying ;
Kept body and soul and the terrors that run in them,
To complete the perdition so aptly begun in them.

And, sainted sir, will you call, I wonder,
The hangman to come and tear us asunder ?
I do not think you will dare to stir in it,
For the sake of your sweet pure name and the slur in it.

How the scented silken congregation
Would stare at the fearful insinuation
That the saintly shepherd who saved so many there
Was a sheep himself, and as rotten as any there !

But if you would prove me wholly in error,
Touch the bell and proclaim the terror
Whether the terror be hidden or told of you,
I and the Devil have got fast hold of you !

Notings from the Note-Book of an Undeveloped Collector.

PART II.

Few manias take more entire possession of a man than that for rare and curious copies of old books, when it comes; and even to those who can feel no sympathy with the book-worm there are certain volumes which give a taste of the book-worm's pleasures, and a touch of his enthusiasm. What can be more suggestive, for instance, than the sight of the first book ever printed from moveable types, the Bible of Gutenberg and Faust, issued at Mayence about 1455? What a mighty engine, both for good and evil, has the press been since then? Whatever other objections there may be to it, there is no intrinsic improbability in the story that it was the strange supply of "manuscripts" at this time, all so precisely alike, which gave rise to the legend of the Devil and Dr. Faustus. The price, however, at which they were first sold must have been very considerable, since Van Praet tells us that Gutenberg had spent 4,000 florins before twelve sheets were printed.

Copies of this "Mazarine Bible," as it is called, because the example that first attracted notice in modern times was discovered in the library of Cardinal Mazarin, fetch very large prices. They are of two kinds—on vellum and on paper. Of those on vellum there are six examples known, of the others about twenty. The beautiful MacCarthy copy on vellum was sold for 6,260 francs; it afterwards passed into the noble collection of Mr. Grenville, who bequeathed it to the British Museum. Another example, with two leaves supplied in manuscript, sold, in 1825, for 504*l*. A copy on paper has, however, brought even a larger price than this—at the sale of the Bishop of Cashel, in 1858, where it fetched 596*l*. It was the Duke of Sussex's copy, and at his sale had been bought for 190*l*.

Earlier by several years than this first Bible are what are styled block-books. There is very little, if anything, to recommend them except their antiquity. Both the woodcuts and the text (they were almost always illustrated) are of the rudest description. As they are without date, it is impossible to arrange them chronologically, on anything like a satisfactory plan; and how widely those who have studied the subject differ in their conclusions may be seen by comparing the ideas of Heineken in 1771, with those of the recent work of Mr. Leigh Sotheby—*Principia Typographica*. There is little doubt that these block-books were originally produced in Holland and the Low Countries; and if we follow Mr. Sotheby, we shall place first on our list the *Apocalypse of St. John*, in Latin, to which the date A.D. 1415-20 may be assigned. The only known

copy of what Mr. Sotheby considers the first edition of this work (according to Heineken it is the fourth, whilst his first is Mr. Sotheby's fifth) is in the possession of Earl Spencer. Of the second edition a copy is in the Bodleian, from Mr. Douce's collection; he gave thirty-one guineas for it.

Of all these block-books, perhaps the most interesting is the *Historia Veteris et Novi Testamenti*, or, as it is more commonly called, the *Biblia Pauperum*, first printed about 1420. It is a small folio, containing forty leaves, printed on one side only, each leaf having three sacred subjects, placed side by side, and four half-length figures of prophets or saints, two above and two below the centre subject. The rest of the page is taken up with an explanation of the illustrations in Latin. The Inglis copy, which was sold in 1826 for thirty-five guineas—about a fourth of its present value—and now in the possession of Mr. R. S. Holford, is considered by Mr. Sotheby to be a specimen of the first edition. Four copies of other editions are in the British Museum. Examples have fetched large prices—one in 1815 selling for 200 guineas, and another in 1813 for 245 guineas. The edition in German, printed at Nördlingen in 1470, sold at the Libri sale in 1862 for 220*l*. Another block-book, the *Speculum Humanæ Salvationis*, has fetched 300 guineas, and the Gardner copy of the German edition of the *Apocalypse*, now in the British Museum, 160*l*.

Very curious and rude are some of the early attempts at the new art of printing from moveable types. Look at the Venice edition of Homer's *Batrachomyomachia* (1486), printed in ink of two colours, black and red, the one giving the text, the other the interlinear scholia. Yet, if we were to judge from other specimens, we should say that the art of printing was perfected almost as soon as it was conceived. Take for instance the *Justin* of Jenson (Ven. 1470). Nothing can exceed the excellence of the paper, the beauty of the type, the artistic set of every page. Jenson had, of course, a great advantage in one point over his contemporaries: he had been employed, before he took up the new art, much to his royal master's disgust, in the mint at Paris.

The rarity of books depends on a variety of circumstances. Sometimes an author has been ashamed of his progeny and done all he could to get it consigned to the flames. Sometimes works have been suppressed by authority; sometimes accidentally destroyed. A further cause of rarity is an author's fancy for having only a few copies,—sometimes not more than ten or twelve, in one case only a single copy,—struck off at the first impression. Many copies, again, were made imperfect by the rage I have mentioned in a previous paper for illustrating *Grainger's Biographical History of England*, and such like books, by portraits torn from other works; and many others were mutilated by a yet more insane mania,—the collecting title-pages, of which there are several volumes in the British Museum.

The fires of persecution were lighted in the Reformation days not only for authors, when they could be found, but for their books when they could not. There is a fragment of a book in the British Museum which

is of the highest interest to English Churchmen. It is the only remaining portion of the first attempt to circulate the English translation of the New Testament by means of the press. Cochleus, in his *Life of Martin Luther*, gives us a history of the book. He was engaged in the office of Peter Quentell, at Cologne, superintending the printing of the works of Abbot Rupert, when he heard that two Englishmen were engaged in printing at the same office a book that would convert all England to Lutheranism. By inveigling the printers to his lodgings, and plying them well with wine, he discovered that the work in question was the New Testament, of which 2,500 copies had been struck off as far as sheet K. He immediately gave information to Herman Rinck, one of the magistrates at Cologne, and had the house searched, but the Englishmen had taken the alarm, and had already disappeared with the printed sheets. Another edition was printed at Worms the same year, probably by Schoeyffer. Both these editions had been circulated in England, when in October and November, 1526, Bishop Tonstall and Archbishop Warham issued orders prohibiting the use of them. All the copies that could be bought up were burnt publicly by Tonstall at Paul's Cross; "a humane, but useless measure," as Blunt says in his *Sketch of the Reformation*; "for it soon appeared that unless he could buy up ink, paper, and types, he was only making himself Tindall's best customer." Of the first edition the Grenville fragment of thirty-one leaves is the only one known; of the second there is a perfect copy, excepting the title-page, in the rich library at the Baptist Museum, Bristol; of a third edition, printed at Antwerp in 1526, there is no copy known.

The first portion of the Old Testament printed in English, excepting certain "Lyves and Hystories taken out of the Bible," which Caxton inserted in his *Golden Legende*, in 1483, was Tindall's Pentateuch. It was issued from the press of Luther's printer, Hans Luft, "at Malborow, in the land of Hesse." By an Act of Parliament passed in 1542, the marginal notes with which it was enriched were directed to be cut off. The only perfect copy now extant is in the Grenville Library.

Among the rarest books of divinity is *The Bible; that is, the Holy Scripture of the Olde and New Testament, faithfully and truly translated out of Douche and Latyn into Englishe*, better known as Coverdale's Bible. Where it was printed is very doubtful, some assigning it to Zurich, others to Cologne, Frankfurt, or Lübeck. The Earl of Leicester's copy is the only one possessing the title. Lea Wilson offered 100*l.* for an original title, and the same sum for the next leaf, but all to no purpose. When his splendid collection of Bibles was dispersed, his "Coverdale," with the two missing leaves supplied in facsimile by Harris, passed into the possession of Mr. Dunn Gardner, at whose sale, on July 7, 1854, it sold for 365*l.* A very imperfect copy sold in 1857 for 190*l.*

The great fire of London, in 1666, made sad havoc among book stores. Dr. Bliss, the well-known editor of that amusing piece of egotism, *Hearne's Diary*, had a curious collection of books printed during the years

immediately preceding the fire, such as perhaps had never been assembled before. Pepys alludes in his *Diary* to the losses sustained at that time:—"September 22, 1666. By Mr. Dugdale I hear the great loss of books in St. Paul's Churchyard, and at their Hall also; some booksellers being wholly undone, and among others, they say, my poor Kirton. And Mr. Crumlum, all his books and household stuff burned: they trusting to St. Fayth's, and the roof of the church falling broke the arch down into the lower church, and so all the goods burned. A very great loss. His father hath lost above 1,000*l.* in books: one book newly printed, a Discourse, it seems, of Courts." The first of the three volumes of Prynne's great work, with its monstrously long title, narrowly escaped destruction in the same fire. From the address to the reader at the end of that volume, it appears that only seventy copies were saved. Sir M. M. Sykes's copy of the three volumes sold for 117*l.* 10*s.* When the Duke of Buckingham's library at Stowe was dispersed, a portion of a fourth volume was discovered, consisting of 400 pages of introduction. This unique fragment excited a most lively competition. It was finally secured for the Library of Lincoln's Inn for 325*l.*

The value of rare books depends, of course, in a great measure on their condition, and collectors sometimes value the margin at a much higher rate than the text. No one was more particular on this point than "Measuring Miller" of Craigintinny. Consequently the prices quoted in bibliographical books often tend to mislead. Copies, for instance, of the first edition of Homer (Flor., 1488) have been purchased for very moderate sums; but I know of one copy—perhaps the finest in existence—which cost the library it now graces 84*l.*, and even this price has been very recently exceeded.

What a magnificent bequest was that of Mr. Grenville,—a library of something over 20,000 volumes which had cost him 54,000*l.* It richly deserves the noble room in which it is now placed. And yet it is said that Mr. Panizzi could not get so much as a piece of calico given him to keep the books, when they first came, from the dust. Amongst them was the only known copy on vellum of the edition of *Livy* printed at Rome by Sweynheim and Pannartz about 1469. In 1815 it had fetched 903*l.*

There is no want of English books which command large prices at sales. The quarto editions, for instance, of the separate plays of Shakspeare cost large sums. What prices they bring! In 1856, there occurred for sale *The Tragical History of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark, 1603.*" Though it wanted the title-page, Mr. Halliwell was content to give 120*l.* for it. Only one other copy of the edition was known—discovered some fifty years since by Sir H. Bunbury, in an old closet at Barton, in Suffolk. This volume, which contained eleven other of Shakspeare's plays, mostly first edition, afterwards passed into the collection of the Duke of Devonshire for 250*l.* The duke's copy wants the last leaf. But the sale at which Shakspeare collectors went altogether mad, was that of Mr. Daniel, of Islington, in 1864. The first edition of *King Richard the Second* (1597), almost unique, fetched 325 guineas; that of *King Richard*

the *Third* (same year), 335 guineas; *The Pleasant Conceited Comedie called Love's Labor's Lost* (1598), 330 guineas; *The History of Henrie the Fourth* (second edition, 1599), 110 guineas; *The Most Excellent and Lamentable Tragedie of Romeo and Juliet* (1599), 50 guineas—a copy of the first edition, 1597, is in the British Museum, bequeathed by David Garrick; *The Chronicle History of Henry the Fifth* (1600), 220 guineas; *The Most Excellent Historie of the Merchant of Venice, with the Extreme Crueltie of Shylocke the Jewe* (1600), 95 guineas; *Much Ado about Nothing* (1600), 255 guineas; *The Midsommer Night's Dreame* (1600), 230 guineas; *The most Pleasant and Excellent Conceited Comedie of Syr John Falstaffe and the Merrie Wives of Windsor* (1602), 330 guineas; *The Famous Historie of Troilus and Cresseid* (1609), 109 guineas, and the *Tragedy of Othello, the Moor of Venice*, 155*l*. Of his other works, *Lucrece* (1594) brought 150 guineas; *Venus and Adonis*, second edition (1594), 240 guineas—(Mr. Grenville, in 1844, gave 116*l*. for the copy now in the British Museum); and the edition of 1596, 300 guineas; and an edition of the *Sonnets* (1609), 215 guineas.

The first folio edition of the *Works of Shakspeare* (1623), so admirably reprinted by Mr. Booth, is a rare treasure. The Grenville copy, said to be the most beautiful known, was bought in 1819 for 116 guineas. The Duke of Roxburgh's copy fetched 100 guineas. At Mr. Baker's sale, a copy described as the only one containing the two cancelled leaves in *As You Like It*, fetched 163*l*. 15*s*. It was bought for America. But Mr. Daniel's copy went far beyond these prices. Most likely it is the tallest and finest copy in existence; but Miss Burdett Coutts gave for it no less than 682 guineas.

In very few cases are the copies of this edition genuine throughout; page after page generally having been supplied in fac-simile by Harris, whose imitations are so exquisite that it requires considerable discernment to detect them. Not unfrequently he obtained paper of the proper date from blank sheets in the State Paper Office. No wonder his eyesight failed him at last; and sad it is that such an accomplished artist, as no doubt he was in his way, should have died in comparative poverty.

Specimens of the earliest productions of the English press command very large prices. What was the first book printed in England, is a question that has occasioned no little controversy. If we could depend on the dates given in the books themselves, we must give to Oxford the honour of introducing the new art into the country. There is an edition of St. Jerome's *Exposicio in Simbolum Apostolorum*, which bears the date 1468. If, however, as is now generally believed,* the date in the imprint ought

* Hearne, however, in his *Diary* (May 7, 1719), has a most circumstantial account of the printing of this book. It was executed by F. Corsellis, one of Gutenberg's workmen, who had been brought over at an expense of 1,500 marks, 300 of which were contributed by Archbishop Bouchier, and the rest by the king. The archbishop being Chancellor of Oxford, sent Corsellis thither under a guard to prevent his escape. After printing the book, he returned to Flanders, and settled at Antwerp, whither he was followed by Caxton to be instructed in the art, about 1470.

to be 1478, Caxton must have the credit of being the first English printer. Of the ninety-four works he is known to have printed, six exist only in fragments, twenty-seven more in single copies; and there are only twelve of which more than ten copies are extant. The most extensive collection of Caxton's is at Lord Spencer's, the next at the British Museum, where, though the number of copies is larger, the number of separate works falls short by three of the Spencer collection. His earliest works were printed abroad; and either at Cologne, or perhaps more probably at Bruges, where the printer Colard Mansion employed a type precisely similar to one of Caxton's, he published, about 1471, the first book printed in English, the *Recuyell of the Histories of Troye*. Sixteen copies of this are in existence, one of which, a matchless one though wanting a leaf, which once belonged to Elizabeth Grey, Queen of Edward IV., was bought by the Duke of Devonshire at the Roxburgh sale for 1060*l.* 10*s.* The first book he printed in England was, *The Game and Play of the Chesse*, dedicated to that Duke of Clarence who ended his days in a butt of Malmsey. His printing press was "in the Abbey of Westmynstre by London." Of other works issued from his press, *The Boke of Tulle of Old Age*, translated out of *Latyn into Frenshe . . . and empyrinted by me symple person, William Caxton*, along with his *Cicero de Amicitia*, sold in 1858 for 275*l.*; his *Boke of the Fayt of Armes of Chivalrye*, and his *Gower's Confessio Amantis*, each brought 336*l.*, and his *Mirror of the World*, 351*l.* 15*s.*, at the Roxburgh sale. After this we need not stop to mention any of the publications of William Maclinia, Wynkyn de Worde, or Richard Pynson who had the honour to be the first "King's printer."

"Not worth an old song" is a saying of questionable force. Three volumes of very rare and curious ballads were sold at Mr. Gutch's sale in 1858 for thirty guineas. In 1852, "204 humorous, romantic, legendary, amatory, and historical broadside ballads," printed in black letter some time between the middle and the end of the seventeenth century, once in the Heber collection, were purchased by Mr. Halliwell, at Mr. Utterson's sale, for 104*l.* 10*s.* One of the most famous of such collections was the Roxburgh one. The ballads were 900 in number, ranging from 1570 to 1680, pasted in three volumes folio, and fetched, at that famous sale, 478*l.* 15*s.* These are now in the British Museum. In 1820, at the Bindley sale, four lots of ballads and broadsides, printed between 1640 and 1688, which had been collected by Narcissus Luttrell, brought 781*l.* But far beyond even this price, in proportion, was the sum given for some old ballads at Mr. Daniel's sale. They were seventy in number, printed between 1559 and 1597, in most beautiful condition, and yielding to no other collection in interest or variety. Mr. Daniel gave a detailed account of them in the *Illustrated London News*, 1856. The price they were sold in 1864 for, was 750*l.* The Society of Antiquaries has a collection, and there are five volumes now at Cambridge, collected by Pepys. They are divided into heroic, romantic, hunting, love pleasant, and love unfortunate. A few of them are old, but mostly they are of the times of Charles I. and Charles II.

Proclamations, again, when they occur for sale, bring large prices. A beautiful volume, in Dr. Bandinel's collection, of the proclamations of Charles I., from 1625 to 1633, sold for 81*l*. Six volumes, belonging to the reigns of Elizabeth, James I., Charles I., and Charles II., brought, in 1858, the more moderate sum of 78*l*. "The most complete collection in existence of the original black-letter broadside proclamations of the Irish Government, commencing with the year 1673, and extending through the reigns of Charles II., James II., William and Mary, Queen Anne, and George I., to the year 1716," was bought at the sale of Dr. Cane, of Kilkenny, 1858, for the Marchioness of Ormonde, for 76*l*. But such volumes have fetched much larger prices than these. I have heard of one picked up on an old bookstall for half-a-crown selling for 120*l*. There is a very fine collection of proclamations in the library of the Society of Antiquaries. In the Bodleian is the magnificent volume of Elizabethan proclamations; and the library of Queen's College, Oxford, has a collection which is nearly, if not quite, matchless, ranging from 1558 to 1694. It contains more than 1,000 proclamations, to say nothing of a very large collection of acts, ordinances, &c., issued during the Commonwealth. The only portion in which it is weak is the time of Charles I. But in addition to this, the same library possesses two most precious volumes, containing a series of proclamations, partly printed and partly in MS., from the time of Henry VII. to 1641. Many of the manuscripts are the original draughts as prepared for the Privy Council; some of the Elizabethan ones having corrections in the handwriting of Mr. Secretary Cecil, and some of the Caroline ones in that of Mr. Secretary Windebank. Two of them are the original copies in vellum, with the signature of Charles I. But perhaps the most interesting paper in the collection is a copy of the only proclamation issued by Lady Jane Grey. It is a somewhat elaborate document, beginning, "Jane, by the grace of God, Queen," &c., and dated "Julie 10, 1553." Grafton lost his privilege as Queen's printer in consequence of having printed it. It was at one time supposed to be unique. Another copy, however, has turned up, which is now in the possession of the Antiquarian Society; but it is not to be compared with the beautiful copy at Queen's.

Very curious and interesting proclamations turn up sometimes. Not long since there was secured for the Royal Library at Windsor one of Queen Mary, declaring herself to be *enccinte*. The Bodleian possesses the proclamation distributed by the Spaniards just before the Armada, declaring their intentions when they had conquered England. Among those exhibited in the show-cases in the British Museum is that of King Charles II. ordering the suppression of two of the works of Milton; who is therein stated to have fled from justice; that issued September 15, 1714, offering 100,000*l*. for the apprehension of Prince James should he attempt to land in England; and that issued August 22, 1745, by Charles Edward "Prince of Wales," offering 80,000*l*. for the apprehension of the "Elector of Hanover." Some other very interesting papers are displayed in the same

collection: for instance, a copy of the ninety-five propositions which Luther on the 31st of October, 1517, posted on the doors of the church of Wittemberg; and the handbill and challenge of "Admirable" Crichton, put up on the church doors in Venice in 1580.

The prices obtained by rare books at auctions are at times utterly beyond all calculations of chances. The object of ambition *vires acquirit eundo* and the excitement leads collectors into vagaries which surely must be as surprising to themselves in sober moments as to everybody else.

The most stupendous price ever obtained for any book was what the Boccaccio's *Decameron* of 1471 brought at the Roxburgh sale. At the beginning of this century the copy then and for a long time afterwards considered to be unique was in the possession of a London bookseller, and was purchased by the duke for 100 guineas. Two other copies are known now—one in the Ambrosian Library at Milan, the other in the Imperial Library, Paris. But the first wants one, and the second three leaves. The edition is said to have been suppressed by papal authority.

The 17th of June, 1812, is the *dies cretâ notandus* in the annals of bibliomania. Dibdin has a most graphic account of it in his *Bibliographical Decameron*. One extract will give the pith of his story:—

"The honour of firing the first shot was due to a gentleman of Shropshire, unused to this species of warfare, and who seemed to recoil from the reverberation of the report himself had made. 'One hundred guineas,' he exclaimed. Again a pause ensued; but anon the biddings rose rapidly to five hundred guineas. Hitherto, however, it was evident that the firing was but masked and desultory. At length all random shots ceased and the champions before named (Earl Spencer and the Marquis of Blandford) stood gallantly up to each other, resolving not to flinch from a trial of their respective strengths. *A thousand guineas* were bid by Earl Spencer, to which the Marquis added *ten*. You might have heard a pin drop. All eyes were turned—all breathing well nigh stopped—every sword was put home within its scabbard, and not a piece of steel was seen to move or to glitter except that which each of these champions brandished in his valorous hand." At length Lord Spencer had bid 2,250*l*. The Marquis quietly added his usual *ten*, and down dropped the hammer. When the Marquis's library was disposed of in 1819, the day chosen for the sale of this famous book was the 17th of June, the anniversary of its former sale. But nothing could revive the old excitement, and it was knocked down for 918*l*. 15*s*. It is now in the possession of Lord Spencer.

Of illustrated works I must only mention one, Turner's *Liber Studiorum*. Here, also, Turner put himself forward as the rival of Claude. Finding that many forgeries of his pictures were being sold as original, Claude determined to make drawings of all his pictures, adding the names of the persons who commissioned them. These drawings accumulated till at his death he is said to have left six volumes of them. Only one is at present in existence, containing 200 drawings, and is in

the possession of the Duke of Devonshire. It is known as Claude's *Liber Veritatis*. When Turner determined to publish a series of drawings which should far eclipse this celebrated volume, he engaged Mr. Lewis as his engraver, but the remuneration was so inadequate that the artist soon refused to proceed. Several other engravers were then engaged, Turner executing some of the plates himself. Often after the plate had been engraved, and several impressions taken off, Turner made large alterations, and, consequently, anything like a perfect copy of the etchings is a most difficult thing to procure. The subscription price was 17*l.* 18*s.* In 1865, Messrs. Sotheby and Wilkinson offered for sale what was described as the best entire copy of the work known to exist, each proof being in the earliest state, having been selected at the printer's before the impressions were issued to subscribers. There were also in it some artist's proofs, much touched and drawn over and altered by Turner, and in many cases bearing his own autograph directions to the engraver. It fetched the very large sum of 450*l.* Mr. Thornbury, in his *Life of Turner*, says, "Before his death" "a copy sold for thirty-one guineas, and since his death fine copies have sold for 3,000*l.*" But Mr. Thornbury here refers to the Stokes' collection of etchings, proofs, and every known plate, besides many duplicates. This collection was offered to the South Kensington Museum for 2,500*l.*; on the purchase being declined, it was broken up, and produced about 3,000*l.*

Bindings are sometimes as much the objects of a collector's ambition as the books themselves. Towards the end of the fifteenth century very beautiful bindings were made for the Medici, the Della Rovere, the D'Este, and other noble families. Aldus, the famous printer of Venice, was perhaps the first to issue books in different styles of covering, to suit the tastes and purses of his customers. There are very early bindings which appear to have been stamped from engraved blocks. Some of them may be even earlier specimens of wood engraving than the Spencer St. Christopher.

One of the first collectors whose bindings are sought after is Michael Majoli; but it was his kinsman, Thomas Majoli, whose devices and style of ornamentation were first imitated by foreign bookbinders. Upon his books is found the inscription, "Tho. Majoli et amicor." Besides this there is his motto, which was generally "Inimici mea michi, non me michi;" and more rarely, as an example in the British Museum, "Ingratis servire nephas." At the Libri sale, in 1859, where there were so many magnificent specimens of bindings, one volume sold for 91*l.*; another, at the Bergeret sale, produced 104*l.*

Still more famous are the "Grolier" bindings. Jean Grolier was born at Lyons in 1479. He was employed by Francis I. as paymaster-general to his forces in Italy, and was afterwards sent on a political mission to Clement VII., who had become very much attached to him. He died in 1565, but his library was not dispersed till 1675. There are forty or more volumes from it now in the British Museum. The earlier

"Groliers" are only ornamented with combinations of various lines, but more elaborate devices of flowers, &c. were afterwards introduced. Grolier had two or three mottoes which he used for his books, but his usual one is, "Portio mea, Domine, sit in terris viventium." At the Libri sale a folio *Heliodorus*, described as the "most superb specimen of Grolier binding ever offered for sale," produced 110*l*. The book itself may be had for a few shillings. But even this price was exceeded at the same sale. Aldus printed the works of Machiavelli, in 1540, in four separate octavo volumes. Grolier had his copies bound in four different patterns. One of the volumes is now in the British Museum; another in the Impérial Library, Paris; a third is, or was, in a private collection at Lyons; and the fourth was sold at the Libri sale for 150*l*. The binding is almost always in morocco; but one specimen in ornamented vellum, the only one known, sold at the same sale for 17*l*.

Books which formerly belonged to the Library of Diana of Poitiers are eagerly sought after. They are in two styles of binding,—one much less ornamented and thought to show her own taste, the other more elaborate and considered to be the gift of her royal lover, Henry II. The celebrated artist "le petit Bernard" is said to have been employed upon them, just as Holbein is reported to have furnished Jos. Cundall, King Henry VIII.'s bookbinder, with devices. Citron morocco was perhaps Diana's favourite binding: the sides of the volumes being ornamented with her cipher,—the double D interlacing with H; and her devices, the interlaced crescents and crowned H, filling up the spaces of the elegantly scrolled border. At the Libri sale, two specimens from her library, both of them works of divinity, produced 80*l*. and 85*l*.

Another connoisseur in bindings was the collector Demetrio Canevari, or Mecenate, as he is also called, physician to the Papal Court. His motto is "ΟΡΘΟΣ ΚΑΙ ΜΗ ΑΟΞΙΩΣ," and his device a medallion, beautifully heightened with gold, silver, and colour, representing Apollo driving his car across the sea towards a rock on which his winged Pegasus is pawing the ground. Specimens of his library are of rare occurrence; one in the Libri collection sold for 78*l*. Another collector who had very good taste for bindings was the infamous Orsini, who strangled his wife with his own hands.

I may just mention one specimen of English bookbinding which occurred at the Libri sale, the finest example of the art in the 16th century, from the library of King Edward VI. It produced 84*l*. 10*s*. Specimens of most of the bindings I have mentioned—some of them very fine ones—may be seen in the show-cases in the British Museum.

Very magnificent bindings were in use long before the invention of printing. In the accounts of the wardrobe of Edward IV., for instance, it appears that Piers Bauduyn was paid, for "binding, gilding, and dressing" two books, twenty shillings each, and sixteen shillings each for four others. Now twenty shillings in those days would have bought an ox. But even this does not represent the whole cost. The binder had

six yards of velvet, as many of silk, besides laces, tassels, copper and gilt clasps and gilt nails, supplied to him. And when we remember the enormous prices of velvet and silk in those days, bookbinding, we are sure, must have been costly indeed. Perhaps the finest collection of beautifully-bound books ever formed was that which belonged to Corvinus, King of Hungary, who died at Buda about 1490. The volumes—80,000 in number, mostly of course MSS.—were bound in brocade, with bosses and clasps of gold and silver. When Buda was taken, in 1526, the Turks very naturally tore off the covers. One most exquisite specimen of rich binding is in the South Kensington Museum. It is a missal case—of small octavo size—of Italian work, about 1580. The binding is gold, ornamented with translucent ruby, emerald and azure enamel. On one side is represented the creation of Eve, with beasts and allegorical figures; on the other, the fountain of Fame, with figures, some drinking, others reclining. It is supposed to have belonged to Henrietta Maria, Queen of Charles I. It cost the Museum 700*l*. Still more valuable was the "Golden Bible," sent over from Russia to the Exhibition of 1862. It was bound in precious metals, and thickly studded with turquoise, diamonds, and Siberian amethysts, and was valued at 4,000*l*. After this, we need not be surprised to find that when Landino had presented a copy of the Dants of 1481 on vellum to the Republican Government of Florence, beautifully embellished with nielli, he was rewarded with the present of a castle.

The collector has another field for his enthusiasm in autographs; of which the show-cases in the British Museum display some most interesting specimens. There, for instance, is the great Duke's list of the cavalry under his command, written on the field of Waterloo just before the battle; there is Nelson's last letter to Lady Hamilton, found open on his desk and unfinished after the battle of Trafalgar. It is easy to imagine that character may be detected in handwriting. Look, for instance, at the free, dashing penmanship of Prince Rupert, and the hard, stern, self-contained signature of Oliver Cromwell. At the sale of the Baker collection in 1855, occurred a very interesting letter of the Prince to Charles I. He had been ordered to leave England, and writes to remonstrate. "The meanest subject you have could not be soe unkinde and unnaturally treated with; however, it shall never lessen my respect to your Majestie, though I am now afflicted, you should be persuaded to doe soe unhandsome a thing with the ill-usage of your Majestie's most obedient nephew and faithful servant, RUPERT." It sold for 13 guineas. Perhaps the largest sum a letter of Cromwell had ever produced was in 1854, when that to Mr. Cotton, "Pastor to the Church at Boston, in New England," sold for 86*l*. It was bought for America. The Baker collection had a very interesting letter of Charles I. to the Marquis of Ormond, in which he declares war to be better than a dishonourable peace, and prefers "the chance of warr than to give my consent to any such allowances of Popery as must evidently bring destruction." This sold for 71*l*. At the

same sale was an equally interesting letter from Lord Strafford to his wife, whilst a prisoner in the Tower, expressing his belief that there was nothing in the charge against him, or that, "at the worst, his Majesty will pardon all." This produced 40*l.* 10*s.*

In the library at Windsor is preserved a very interesting literary relic of the unfortunate King. Anybody that has read Milton's *Iconoclastes* will remember the passage:—"I shall not instance an abstruse writer, wherein the King might be less conversant, but one whom we well know was the closet companion of these hid solitudes, William Shakspeare." The King's copy is still to be seen in the royal library.

Of autographs in books the British Museum has a very rich collection, though at the time when the reckless sale of duplicates was practised, some volumes were most culpably parted with. Among them is said to have been King Henry VIII.'s copy of the book that won for him the title of defender of the faith, with his autograph corrections, and a copy of the works of the Emperor Julian, with notes by James I. But there is no chance of the present chief librarian committing such mistakes as these. Oxford, however, has no reason to complain of the Museum malpractices, since she owes to them the possession of the splendid Douce collection.

At the Hibbert sale in 1829, there was purchased for the Museum, for the sum of 267*l.* 15*s.*, a German Bible, said to have belonged to Luther up to the time of his death, and afterwards to Melancthon, Bugenhagen, and Major. Autographs of all these famous men were in it. If, however, we are to believe Mr. Sotheby, they are all forgeries. Less open to doubt is a letter—closely connected with the history of religion—of John Wesley to "Dear Sammy." In it he says, "I still think when the Methodists leave the Church of England, God will leave them. . . . It would be contrary to all common sense, as well as to good conscience, to make a separation now."

There are few things in literary history more remarkable than the fact that relics of the handwriting of so voluminous an author as Shakspeare are so rare. There do not appear to be more than five or six that are undoubtedly genuine. There are, of course, the three signatures to his will, and the Guildhall Library has the counterpart of the document to be mentioned presently, for which was paid the sum of 147*l.* In 1858 the British Museum secured the original mortgage-deed by which "William Shakspeare, of Stratford-upon-Avon, gentleman," granted to Henry Walker, citizen of London, a lease of a dwelling-house in Blackfriars, for the term of ten years. On the first of the four labels which are attached to it is the signature "W^m Shakspe^r." It cost the Museum 300 guineas. In 1805 the Bodleian Library secured a specimen, which there is little doubt is genuine, at a ridiculously small price. It is written in faded ink on the title-page of a small octavo Aldine edition of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (1502). The signature is "Wm. Shr." The owner of the book in 1682 wrote within the cover, "This little book of Ovid

was given to me by W. Hall, who said it was once Will. Shakspeare's." Some doubts were thrown upon the genuineness of the signature in the auction-room, and the library became possessed of this rich treasure for 9*l*.

If, however, there is a singular scarcity of Shakspeare's autographs, this is by no means the case with those of another of our greatest poets, Milton. The Library of Trinity College, Cambridge, has a rich collection of his juvenile and other poems—including *Comus*, *Lycidas*, and the first design of what was afterwards *Paradise Lost*. Its original form is that of a Scriptural drama. The MS. of the first book of *Paradise Lost* which was forwarded to London for licensing, is now in the possession of Mr. Baker, of Bayfordbury, Herts. In the Bodleian, again, are some autographs of his works which he had presented to Dr. Rous, its principal librarian. In the British Museum is a volume of *Aratus* with his autograph which was purchased for 40*l*. 10*s*. But perhaps the most interesting of Milton's papers is the covenant indenture between himself and Samuel Symons, printer, for the sale and publication of *Paradise Lost*. It is dated April 27, 1667. By it the printer was to pay him 5*l*. at once, and 5*l*. additional on the sale of each of the first three impressions—each impression consisting of 1,300 copies. Milton, therefore, was to receive 20*l*. in all, if 3,900 copies were sold. The sale, however, never reached this point, for by a deed of release made by his widow in 1680, she covenanted to receive 8*l*. in full of all demands, 10*l*. having been paid previously. The original deed was formerly in the possession of Sir Thomas Lawrence, at whose sale it fetched 63*l*. It afterwards belonged to the poet Rogers, who gave, it is said, 100 guineas for it. He presented it to the British Museum. Mr. Sotheby, however, in his sumptuous volume, *Ramblings in the Elucidation of the Autograph of Milton*, would have us believe that the signature after all is not really Milton's—not because it is impossible for a blind man to make a signature, as anybody may convince himself on being blindfolded, but because it is so exactly like the hand of an amanuensis employed on his treatise *De Doctrina Christiana*. In 1858 Mr. Monckton Milnes—now Lord Houghton—secured a similar example signature to the conveyance of a bond for 400*l*. to the Cyriack Skinner to whom Milton dedicated his noble sonnet on his blindness. The price paid was only 19 guineas. It had belonged to Mr. Singer, at whose sale an interesting letter from Nell Gwynne was disposed of. It is addressed to Lawrence Hyde, the second son of the great Lord Chancellor: but pretty Nelly's education had been sadly neglected, and she had to use the services of a friend. Her letter concludes, "We are agoing to supe with the king at Whitehall and my Lady Harvie, the king remembers his sarvis to you. Now lets talke of State affaires for we never caried things so cunningly as now, for we don't know whether we shall have peice or war, but I am for war, and for no other reason but that you may come home. I have a thousand merry conceits but I can't make her write 'um, and therefore you must take the will for

the deed. Good-bye. Your most loveing, obedient, faithfull and humbel sarvant, E. G."

In the Soane Museum is a most interesting volume, the original copy of the *Gerusalemme Liberata* in the handwriting of Tasso. Lord Guildford, to whom it formerly belonged, has written on the flyleaf, "I hope it will be recorded to future ages that England possesses the original MS. of one of the four greatest epic poems the world has produced, and beyond all doubt, the only one of the four now existing." Other MSS. of Tasso are in the British Museum. The prices at which the *Cortegiano of Castiglione*, with an autograph sonnet of Tasso, has been sold at different times, are perhaps worth mentioning. At Singer's sale in 1818 it produced 90*l.*, at Hibbert's (1829) 100*l.*, at Hanrott's (1838) 68*l.*, at Heber's (1835) 41*l.*, at Bishop Butler's (1840) 64*l.* It contained also a copy of Crichton's challenge already alluded to. Another very interesting book is a copy of Tasso's *Gerusalemme Liberata* (4to., Parma, 1581) with MS. corrections in the handwriting of the printer Aldus, to whom it is supposed they were communicated by Tasso himself, whilst in prison. Bishop Butler gave 80 guineas for it: at the Libri sale it produced only 18*l.*

Of more modern autographs, it will be sufficient to mention those of Sir Walter Scott. At Mr. Utterson's sale the original MS. of *Peveril of the Peak* sold for 44*l.*; in 1857 it brought 50*l.* In the beginning of 1855 *Kenilworth* was bought for the British Museum for 41*l.* But the prices obtained last July for those disposed of by Christie and Manson go far beyond this. *Anne of Geierstein* fetched 121 guineas; fragments of *Waverley* and *Ivanhoe*, with some other papers, 180 guineas. Of Sir Walter's poems, *Marmion* brought 191 guineas; the *Lady of the Lake*, 264; the *Vision of Don Roderick* and some other poems, 87; *Rokeby* 180; and the *Lord of the Isles* 101. I ought perhaps to mention one more instance, *Gray's Elegy*, the MS. of which was purchased by Mr. R. Wrightson in 1854 for 180*l.*

When we remember the very large prices that have been paid for ancient MSS. and the autographs of distinguished persons, we cannot be surprised at the number of forgeries that have been perpetrated. I do not allude to such instances as that of the *Amber Witch*, a trick played off upon the infallible critics of Tübingen with such astonishing success, nor again to such a case as Chatterton's famous Rowley MSS.; but this present century has seen some wonderful examples of wholesale forgeries. In 1852 there were brought to Mr. Murray forty-seven autograph letters of Lord Byron. From the quarter through which they came to him, he had reason to believe them genuine, and he accordingly purchased them for something over 120*l.* They were forgeries every one. About the same time Mr. Moxon bought at a sale several letters of Shelley. These he very naturally published. But here again the fraud was soon discovered, and Mr. Moxon accordingly suppressed the book and called in all the copies that had been delivered to the trade. The book is now a curiosity. The forged MSS. themselves were given to the British Museum.

But by far the most accomplished forger of modern times is M. Simonides. He comes from the island of Syrene, opposite Caria, and made his first public appearance at Athens, where he offered some MSS. for sale, which he said had been carried off secretly from Mount Athos. A commission, which was engaged to examine them, reported favourably, especially upon a MS. of Homer, which accordingly was purchased at a high price. Before very long it was discovered that the text of this ancient MS. was Wolf's, with all the *errata*. Next he appeared at Constantinople, where he tried hieroglyphics, cuneiform inscriptions, and Armenian history, but somewhat unsuccessfully. Nothing daunted, he tried a new device, and came out as another Douster Swivel. He declared that at a certain spot an Arabic MS. in Syriac characters would be discovered by digging. Workmen were accordingly employed, Simonides himself not being allowed to descend. By-and-by a pause was made for luncheon, and not long afterwards Simonides called out, "There it is; bring it up." The soil about it, however, was quite different from that of the ground. The workmen were grinning, and when interrogated confessed that during luncheon the Greek came out for a short time, jumped into the pit, and began to burrow.

He next made his appearance in England with, amongst other wonderful treasures, a MS. of Homer on serpent's skin, which professed to have been sent from Chios to Hipparchus, son of Pisistratus. This and several others he persuaded Sir Thomas Phillips to purchase. Almost the only libraries which he failed in cheating were the British Museum and the Bodleian. On visiting the latter place he showed some fragments of MSS. to Mr. Coxe, who assented to their belonging to the twelfth century.

"And these, Mr. Coxe, belong to the tenth or eleventh century?"

"Yes, probably."

"And now, Mr. Coxe, let me show you a very ancient and valuable MS. I have for sale, and which ought to be in your library. To what century do you consider this belongs?"

"This, Mr. Simonides, I have no doubt," said Mr. Coxe, "belongs to the nineteenth century."

The Greek and his MS. disappeared.

Some time afterwards a palimpsest manuscript was sent to Berlin, professing to be a history of the Kings of Egypt in Greek, by Uranius, of Alexandria. The Academy declared it genuine, and the Minister of Public Instruction was ordered to purchase it for 5,000 thalers. Professor Dindorf offered the University of Oxford the honour of giving this valuable book to the world, and the work was accordingly begun under the editorship of the professor. Before many sheets, however, were struck off, notice came that the printing was to be stopped. Lepsius, naturally anxious to know how far Uranius supported or demolished some of his theories about Egyptian history, was disappointed as well as amused to find that the book was little more than a translation into very bad Greek of portions of

the writings of Bunsen and himself. Ehrenberg then examined the manuscript with his microscope, and discovered that the palimpsest was really later than the more modern one,—the *old* ink overlaid the *new*.

Simonides' last appearance is a very amusing one: he claims to be the writer of the *Codex Sinaiticus* of the New Testament, that was discovered by Tischendorf, partly in 1844 and partly in 1859, in one of the monasteries of Mount Athos. The account which Simonides gives of it is that in 1839 the monks of the Russian convent determined to make a transcript of the Scriptures in ancient characters on vellum as a present to the Emperor Nicholas. Dionysius the scribe to the monastery declining to undertake the work, Simonides, the nephew of the head of the monastery, offered to execute it. The Archimandrite, Dionysius of Xeropotami, another monastery on Mount Athos, declares that the story is false in every particular. There is little doubt that the manuscript which has been published so magnificently in four folio volumes at the expense of the Emperor of Russia is the oldest manuscript of the New Testament in existence.

I ought perhaps to mention a circumstance which was alluded to at the recent meeting of the British Association. There has very lately been communicated to the French Academy an elaborate correspondence between Newton and Pascal, which, if genuine, would transfer to the latter the honour of the discovery of the law of gravitation. Sir D. Brewster, however, gave, at Dundee, several very strong reasons for considering the correspondence "a gigantic fraud—the greatest ever attempted in the world, connected with science and literature."

For the Wall of a Friend's Study.

STONE walls, they say, have ears—"Twere scarcely wrong
To wish that these walls likewise had a tongue.
How many gracious words would then be said,
How many precious counsels uttered;
What terse quotations fresh applied and fit,
What gay retorts and summer-lightning wit,
What sweet and deep affections would find vent,
What hourly invocations upward sent!—
No,—they their treasured secrets ne'er let fall—
Mute as this poor handwriting on the wall.

A. M.

The Abkhasian Insurrection

OF AUGUST 8, 1866.

Like doth quit like, and measure still for measure.

"So'ouk-Soo," or "Cool Waters," is one of the loveliest spots in the lovely province of Abkhasia. Lying only a few miles inland from the eastern Black Sea shore, and on the first rise of the wooded Caucasus, a day's ride north of the town and harbour of Soukhoun-Kalé, it was from old times a favourite summer residence of the chiefs of Abkhasia; their winter was more often passed at Drand or Otchemchiri, farther down the coast.

But in addition to its natural beauty and residential importance, this locality has acquired a special title to almost European interest since August, 1866, when it became the scene and starting-point of an outbreak—disguised in distorted newspaper accounts under fictions of brigandage, slave-driving, and the like, but which was in fact nothing else than an Eastern re-enactment of events familiar, since 1830, to Warsaw and the Western Provinces of the Russian Empire.

During the month of November, 1866, while the memories of the Abkhasian insurrection were still recent, and the lingering autumn of the Caucasus yet permitted horse-travelling (for in winter these mountains become totally impassable), we—that is, myself with a Mingrelian servant and guide—arrived at So'ouk-Soo, after a ten hours' ride from Soukhoun-Kalé, through bush and forest, stream and mire. Roads are luxuries often announced in programme, sometimes talked of, but never seen in these provinces. It was already dark when, after much clambering and slipping, we found ourselves on a sort of plateau, entangled in a labyrinth of hedges, where scattered lights glimmered among the bushwood, and dogs barking in all directions gave us to know that we had reached So'ouk-Soo. Like most other Abkhasian villages, its houses are neither ranged in streets nor grouped in blocks, but scattered as at random, each in a separate enclosure. The houses themselves are one-storied and of wood, sometimes mere huts of wattle and clay; the enclosures are of cut stakes, planted and interwoven latticewise; the spaces between these hedgerows serve for the passage of countless goats and oxen that pass the night within their masters' precincts, and go out to pasture during the day. Old forest-trees, fresh underwood, bramble, and grass grow everywhere, regardless of the houses, which are often in a manner lost among them; one is at times

right in the middle of a village before one has even an idea of having approached it.

After much hallooing and much answering in sibilants and gutturals,—really the Abkhasian alphabet seems to contain nothing else,—we prevailed on some peasants to get up and guide us through the darkness to the house of the Natchalnick, or Governor of the district. Here we passed the remainder of the night with his Excellency, a Georgian by birth, and, like every one else of these ilks, who is not of serfsh origin, a prince by title, but now an officer in the Russian army, into which the “natives,” fond as negroes of gay dress and glitter, are readily attracted by lace and epaulettes. Many of the “princes” of the land—elsewhere chiefs or sheykhs at most—have, on this motive, with the additional hope of a decoration, assumed the badges of Russian military service, wherein they easily obtain subordinate posts; and there aid as spies or as tools in disarming the constantly recurring discontent of their countrymen, till some day or other their own personal discontent breaks out, and then the tool, no longer serviceable, is broken and thrown aside, to be replaced, where wanted, by another.

Early next morning, while the dew glittered on the rank grass, and the bright sun shone slant through the yet leafy trees, we rode, accompanied by the “Natchalnick” and his whole suite of Georgians and Mingrelians in Cossack dress, to visit the “Meidan” of So’ouk-Soo, where the first shot of insurrection had been fired four months before.

A “Meidan,” or “open ground,” is—all know who have visited the East—the necessary adjunct of every town or village honoured by a chieftain’s residence. It serves for town-hall, for park, for parade-ground, for scene of all public gathering, display, business, or amusement. On it is invariably situated the chief’s or governor’s abode; a mosque, if the land be Mahometan, a church, if Christian, is never wanting; the main street or artery of the locality terminates here. Lastly, it is seldom devoid of a few large trees, the shade of loiterers.

The Meidan of So’ouk-Soo offers all these characteristic features, but offers them after a manner indicating the events it has witnessed, and the causes or consequences of those events. It is an open book, legibly written by the Nemesis of history, the “measure for measure,” the reciprocated revenges of national follies and national crimes.

“Which living waves where thou didst cease to live,” says Byron, contrasting the quiet prolonged existence of great nature with the short and turbulent period of human life. Much the same feeling comes over one at So’ouk-Soo. The green grassy plot dotted with noble trees—beech, elm, and oak; around, the swelling uplands, between which the “cool waters” of the torrent—whence the name of the place—rush sparkling down to the blue sea; beyond, the huge Caucasian mountain-chain, here seen in all its central magnificence of dark forest below and white fantastic peaks above, in unearthly wildness of outline beyond the dreams of the most enthusiastic pre-Raphaelite landscape-painter; above,

the ever-varying sky ; around, the fresh hill-breeze : The chiefs of Abkhasia could not have found in all their domains a fairer, a more life-giving place for their residence. But another story is told by the traces of a ruined mosque on one side of the Meidan, and near it some neglected tombs bearing on the carved posts—which here replace monumental stones—the Mahometan symbolic turban. Close by are four wooden crosses, sunk and awry, freshly planted in the still loose mould of as many recent graves. Next, the blackened walls and empty windows of a large burnt house surrounded by a broken stone-wall. Further on, a second fire-ruin, amid the trees and shrubs of a yet thickly-growing garden. Opposite, on the other side of the Meidan, and alone intact and entire, as though triumphing over the ruin it has in no small measure caused, stands a church—a small building of the semi-Byzantine style usual in Russian and Georgian ecclesiastical architecture hereabouts. Close by is a large house, symmetrically built, with a porch of Greek marble and other signs of former display. But all within has been gutted and burnt : the long range of stone windows opens into emptiness, the roof has fallen in, and the marble columns are stained and split with fire. Here, too, in the same strange contrast of life and death, a beautiful garden, where the mixture of cypress and roses, of flowering trees and deep leafy shrubbery, betokens Turkish taste, forms a sideground and a background to the dismantled dwelling. Some elms and a few Cossack-tenanted huts complete the outer circle of the Meidan.

Each one of these objects has a history, each one is a foot-print in the march of the Caucasian Nemesis, each one a record of her triumph and of her justice.

The ruined mosque and turban-crowned tomb-posts recall the time when Mahometanism and submission to the great centre of orthodox Islam, Constantinople, was the official condition of Abkhasia. This passed into Russian rule and Christian lordship ; and the Nemesis of this phase is marked by the wooden crosses under which lie the mutilated corpses of Colonel Cognard, Russian Governor-General of Abkhasia, of Ismailoff, Russian "Natchalnik" of So'ouk-Soo, of Cheripoff, the Tiflis Commissioner, and of Colonel Cognard's aide-de-camp : they perished in the outbreak of August. The large burnt house close by was the abode of Alexander Shervashiji, brother of the last native chief of Abkhasia. Less than half a century since the family bartered national independence and Islam against Russian popes and epaulettes. Their Nemesis has come too. In this very house Cognard and his suite were slaughtered. The ruin close by was once the residence of the ill-famed "Natchalnik" Ismailoff ; it recalls the special vengeance of licentious tyranny—how, we shall see afterwards. The church, alone yet intact, is of old date and of Georgian construction—once abandoned, then revived and repaired by the renegade Shervashijis, its Nemesis is now in its lonely silence. The ruin of hewn stone, Turkish in style, was the palace of Michael Shervashiji, the last native-born ruler of the province. Russian in uniform, Abkhasian at heart,

true to his own interests, false to those of others, he constructed this palace on his return from a visit to the west: it inaugurated the beginning of a late return to the old Ottoman alliance; but with the general fate of return movements—especially when undertaken after their time—it inaugurated also his own ruin and that of his nation. The Cossack and Abkhasian huts further on were yet tenanted in November last: they are now empty.

We alighted, visited these strange memorials one by one, heard the story of each, remounted our horses, galloped up and down the springy turf of the Meidan, and then plunged into the deep wooded ravine north-east, and left the scene of inconstancy, violence, and blood, on our way to the districts of Bzibb and northern Abkhasia.

But our readers must halt a little longer on the Meidan if they desire to understand the full import of the tragedy of which we have just seen the stage decorations.

Of the early history of the Abkhasian race little is known, and little was probably to be known. More than two thousand years since we find them, in Greek records, inhabiting the narrow strip between the mountains and the sea, along the central eastern coast of the Euxine, precisely where later records and the maps of our own day place them. But whence these seeming autochthons arrived, what was the cradle of their infant race, to which of the great "earth-families," in German phrase, this little tribe, the highest number of which can never have much exceeded a hundred thousand, belonged, are questions on which the past and the present are alike silent. Tall stature, fair complexion, light eyes, auburn hair, and a great love for active and athletic sport, might seem to assign them a Northern origin; but an Oriental regularity of feature, and a language which, though it bears no discoverable affinity to any known dialect, has yet the Semitic post-fixes, and in guttural richness distances the purest Arabic or Hebrew, would appear to claim for them a different relationship. Their character, too, brave, enterprising, and commercial in its way, has yet very generally a certain mixture of childish cunning, and a total deficiency of organising power, that cement of nations, which removes them from European and even from Turkish resemblance, while it recalls the so-called Semitic of south-western Asia. But no tradition on their part lays claim to the solution of their mystery, and records are wanting among a people who have never committed their vocal sounds to writing; they know that they are Abkhasians, and nothing more.

Pagans, like all early nations, they received a slight whitewash of Christianity at times from the Byzantine Empire, at times from their Georgian neighbours; till at last the downfall of Trebizond and the extension of the Ottoman power on their frontier by sea and by land rendered them what they have still mostly remained, Mahometans. Divided from time immemorial into five main tribes, each with its clannish subdivisions, the un-euphonic names of which we pass over out of sheer compassion to printers and readers, they first, at the beginning of the

seventeenth century, received a common master in the person of Tahmuras-khan, a Persian by birth, native of Sherwan, whence the family name of Sherwajee, modified into Shervashiji, but claiming descent from the ancient kings of Iran. Having in the year 1625 lent considerable aid to the Turks in their interminable contest with the Persians for the mastery of Georgia, he was by them confirmed in the government of Abkhasia; his residence was at Soukhoun, whence for a while his descendants, still known among the Turks by the by-name of "Kizil-Bash," synonymous with "Persian," ruled the entire province. But when somewhat later Soukhoun became the abode of an Ottoman Pasha, the Shervashijis transferred their quarters to So'ouk-Soo, which henceforth became in a manner the capital of Abkhasia.

The treaty of Adrianople, in 1829, handed over the Western Caucasian coast to Russian rule; and the ruling Shervashiji (Hamood Beg), then in the prime of life, showed himself a devoted worshipper of the rising,—if not sun,—Aurora Borealis of Petersburg. Quitting his ancestral religion and name, he was baptized into Russian Christianity under the title of Michael Beg, received a high rank in the Russian army, and, head and hand, did the work of his new masters. For all the long years that the Circassian struggle lasted, through the months wasted by Omar Pasha in Mingrelia, and during all the squandered and lost opportunity—squandered in 1855, lost in 1856—of restoring and of securing the freedom of the Caucasus, perhaps of all Central Asia, from the yoke to which more and more necks must daily bow, Michael Shervashiji was by turns the main implement of Russian diplomacy in disuniting Western Caucasus from the common cause, and the military executioner to whom was entrusted the subdual, and even extermination, of his more patriotic neighbours. With the short-sighted acuteness common among Easterns he saw only his own present advantage, and took no heed that while helping to destroy his petty though hereditary rivals he was, in the Russian point of view, cutting away the last props of his own rule. Meanwhile his every request was granted, every privilege confirmed. Russian garrisons were indeed at Soukhoun-Kalé, at Gagri, at other stations of the coast; but inland Michael Shervashiji was sole lord and master, and not even a Russian officer could venture a "werst" up the interior without his permission and escort.

All this was very well for a time; Shamyl was still unconquered, and Michael Shervashiji was too valuable an ally for the Russians not to be humoured,—Shakspeare might have said "fooled,"—to the top of his bent, even at some temporary sacrifice of Russian uniformization and monopoly. But at last the circle of hunters narrowed round the mountain deer at bay in the heights of Gunib, and eyes less keen than Michael's could foresee near at hand the moment when the last independence of the Caucasus would have ceased to be. *Tua res agitur paries cum proximus ardet*, can be thought in Abkhasian no less than expressed in Latin; and Michael grew uneasy at the prospect of a boundless horizon of Russian

friends. His health suddenly but opportunely failed, a change of air,—of water Eastern M.D.'s would say,—became necessary; a journey to Europe was recommended; a passport was taken, rather than granted; and the great Shervashiji, like many other princes, went to try the waters.

That the said waters should in a few months have restored his health was quite natural; it was, however, somewhat singular that they should at the same time have had an Osmanizing effect on his own constitution. Some say they were the waters of the Bosphorus that acted on him thus; others attribute it to a reaction produced by the waters of the Volga, which, in a visit to Moscow, he drank near their source about this very time. Certainly on his return strange and anti-Muscovite symptoms appeared. His new residence at So'ouk-Soo, the ancestral seat of his independence, rose on a Turkish model; his manners, his speech, grew less Russian. It was noticed, too, that on entering church he no longer uncovered his head, a decided hint, said the Russians, that church and mosque were for him on much the same footing. Perhaps the Russians were not far wrong.

Then came 1864, the great Circassian emigration—i.e. the expulsion of well nigh a million of starving and plundered wretches from their country, for the crime of having defended that country against strangers—was accomplished; in Eastern phrase, the Abkhasian "back was cut," and now came their turn to receive the recompence of their fidelity to Russia and their infidelity to their native Caucasus. The first and main tool of Tiflis had been Michael Shervashiji; he was accordingly the first to receive his stipend.

Too late aware what that stipend was likely to be, he had retired into an out-of-the-way country residence some hours to the interior, behind Otchemchiri. Here, in November, 1864, the Russian "pay-day" found him, in the shape of a detachment of soldiers sent by his Imperial Highness the Grand Duke Michael to invite and escort him to the viceregal presence at Tiflis. Whether thinking that resistance would only make matters worse, or reckoning on the deceptive chances of what is called "an appeal to generosity," the Beg at once gave himself up to the troops. By them he was forthwith conducted, not to Tiflis, but to the coast, where lay the ship appointed to convey him to Kertch, whence began his destined journey to Russia and Siberia. A traitor, he met a traitor's recompence, and that, as was most fitting, at the hands of those in whose behalf his life had been for thirty-five years one prolonged treason to his country. Yet that country wept him at his departure—he was their born prince, after all, and no stranger—and they wept him still more when the news of his death—the ready consequence of exile at an advanced age into the uncongenial Siberian climate and Siberian treatment, but by popular rumour attributed to Russian poison—reached them in the spring of 1866. His corpse was brought back to his native mountains, and he was buried amid the tears and wailings of his Abkhasian subjects.

They had, indeed, already other cause for their wailings. Hardly had

their last prince ceased to live, than measures were taken by the viceregal Government for the nominal demarcation, the real confiscation, of the lands of the Abkhasian nobility; while the peasants, for their part, found the little finger of Russian incorporation heavier than all the loins of all the Shervashijis. Russian custom-houses formed a cordon along the coast; Russian Cossacks and Natchalniks were posted everywhere up the country; the whole province was placed under Russian law and military administration; Abkhasian rights, Abkhasian customs and precedents were henceforth abolished. More still, their religion, the great supplement of nationality in the East—because in its Eastern form it embodies whatever makes a nation, its political and social, its public and private being—was now menaced. Russian chronologists discovered that the Abkhasians had once been Christians, whence the Tifis Government drew the self-evident conclusion that they had no right to be at present Mahometans. An orthodox bishop or archbishop, I forget which, of Abkhasia, appeared on the scene, and the work, or rather the attempt at proselytism was diligently pushed forward by enticement and intimidation under hierarchical auspices. Lastly, a census of the population,—a process which ever since David numbered the children of Israel and brought on them the plague in consequence, has been in ill-odour in the East,—was ordered.

Of the Shervashiji family many remained. Michael's own brother, Alexander, still resided, though without authority, at So'ouk-Soo; George, Michael's eldest son, now a Russian officer, and the Grand Duke's aide-de-camp, had returned from Petersburg, where no amount of champagne and cards had been spared to make him a genuine Russian; epaulettes and aigrettes would, it was to be hoped, retain him such. But bred in the bone will not out of the flesh, and he was still a Shervashiji, nor had he forgotten the rights of heir-apparent. Another and a powerful branch of the same family, the relatives of Said Beg Shervashiji of Kelasoor, a Mahometan, and who had died poisoned it was said by his Christian kinsman and rival, Michael, were also in the country, and seemed inclined to forget family quarrels in the common cause. Besides these were two other "houses" of special note, the Marshians and the Ma'ans. The former had, like the Shervashijis, been in general subservient to Russia—some had even apostatized from Islam; but their chief, Shereem Beg, a Mahometan, had married Michael Shervashiji's sister, and state marriages in the East are productive of other results than mere non-interventions and children. The other family, the Ma'ans, staunch Islam, had for some time previous broken off Russian connection: one of them, Mustapha Agha, had even taken service in the Ottoman army. Their head, Hasan Ma'an, had quitted his Abkhasian abode at Bambora, half way between Soukhoun and So'ouk-Soo, for the Turkish territory of Trebizond, where he lived within call, but without grasp.

Discontent was general and leaders were not wanting; yet just and judicious measures on the part of the Russians might have smoothed all

down; but their Nemesis and that of Abkhasia had decreed that such measures should not be taken,—the exact reverse.

In the month of July, 1866, a commission headed by the civilian Cheripoff had come from Tiflis to complete the survey and estimate of the lands, those of the Shervashijis in particular. This commission had taken up its head-quarters at So'ouk-Soo along with the local military Governor, Ismailoff, and a body of Cossacks about two hundred strong. Some of these last were stationed at the coast village of Gouda'outa, a few miles distant. To So'ouk-Soo now flocked all the discontented chiefs, and of course their followers; for no Abkhasian noble can stir a foot out of doors without a "tail" of at least thirty, each with his long slender-stocked gun, his goat-hair cloak, his pointed head-dress, and, for the rest, a knife at his girdle, and more tears than cloth in his tight grey trousers and large cartridge-breasted coat. Some mezzotints in *Hughes' Albanian Travels*, old edition, two volumes quarto, where Suliotes, Albanians, and the like are to be seen clambering over rocks, gun on shoulder, in the evident intention of shooting somebody, give a tolerable idea of these fellows, only they are more ragged than the heroes of the said mezzotints, also less ferocious. The commission lodged in the houses about the Meidan; the Abkhasians—for it was summer—camped on the Meidan itself, filling it with guns and gutturals.

Much parleying took place. The Abkhasians were highly excited—why, we have already seen; the Russians, not yet aware with whom they had to deal, were insolent and overbearing. The fire of contest was, unavowedly but certainly, fanned by many of the Abkhasian chiefs, not unwilling to venture all where they saw that if they ventured nothing they must lose all. Alexander Shervashiji was there in his own house on the Meidan; his nephew George had arrived from Tiflis: the Russian decorations on his breast lay over a heart no less anti-Russian than his uncle's and his father's—so at least said the Russians: perhaps it suited them to incriminate the last influential representatives of the Shervashiji family. There too were many of the Marshians: was Shereem Beg amongst them? Some said, some denied. "Se non è vero è ben trovato," was the Russian conclusion. But more active than any, more avowedly at the head of what now daily approached nearer to revolt, were the two Ma'an brothers, Mustapha and Temshook—the former lately returned from Turkey—both men of some talent and of much daring.

Meanwhile news of all this was brought to Colonel Cognard, the Russian Governor-General of Abkhasia, and then resident at Soukhoum-Kalé. A violent, imperious man, full of contempt for all "natives," and like many of foreign origin, more Russian than the Russians themselves, he imagined that his presence at So'ouk-Soo would at once suffice to quell the rising storm and awe the discontented into submission. Accordingly, on the first week of August, he arrived on the scene, and lodged in the great house of Alexander Shervashiji—whither, in consequence, the whole attention of either party, Russian and Abkhasian, was now directed.

Throughout the whole of this affair, it is curious to observe how the Russians, men of no great sensibility themselves, ignored the sensibilities of others, and seemed to think that whatever the injury, whatever the wrong, inflicted by a Russian Government, it ought to arouse in its victims no other feeling than resignation at most. Here in Abkhasia the hereditary ruler of the country had, after life-long services, in time of profound tranquillity, with nothing proved or even distinctly charged against him, been suddenly dragged into exile and premature death ; his family, those of all the Abkhasian nobility, had been deprived of their rights, and threatened with the deprivation of their property ; ancestral customs, law, religion, national existence,—for even Abkhasians lay claim to all these,—had been brought to the verge of Russian absorption into not-being ; and the while Cognard with his friends could not imagine the existence of any Abkhasian discontent that would not at once be appeased, be changed into enthusiastic, into Pan-slavistic loyalty, by the appearance of that "*deus ex machinâ*" a Russian Governor-General. *Vid.* Warsaw *passim*.

Nemesis willed it otherwise. Cognard's demeanour was brutal, his every word an insult. The nobles presented their griefs ; he refused to recognize them as nobles. The peasants clamoured ; he informed them that they were not Abkhasians but Russians. In vain Alexander Shervashiji and the Marshians, sensible and moderate men the most, expostulated and represented that the moment was not one for additional irritation ; Cognard was deaf to expostulation and advice ; his fate was on him. It did not delay. On the 8th of August a deputation composed of the principal Abkhasian nobility laid before him a sort of Oriental ultimatum in the form of an address ; the Russian Governor-General answered it by kicking address and nobles out of doors. It was noon : a cry of vengeance and slaughter arose from the armed multitude on the Meidan.

The assault began on the Cossacks stationed about the house ; they were no less unprepared than their masters, and could offer but little resistance. Already the first shots had been fired and blood had flowed when Cognard sent out George Shervashiji to appease those who should by right have been his subjects—whose rebellion was, in fact, for his own father's sake. That he never returned is certain. By his own account, which was confirmed on most hands, he did his best to quiet the insurgents, but unsuccessfully. They forced him aside, said he, and detained him at a distance while the outbreak went on. The Russians ascribed to him direct participation in what followed ; the reasons for such imputation are palpable, the fact itself improbable.

In a few minutes the Cossacks before the gate were overpowered and slaughtered ; the Abkhasians burst into the house. Its owner, Alexander Shervashiji, met them on the inner threshold, and implored them to respect the sanctity of their chief's hearth. But that moment had gone by, and the old man was laid hold of by his countrymen and led away—respectfully indeed, but in a manner to preclude resistance—while the massacre

begun without doors continued within. Whatever was Russian perished : the luckless Commissioner from Tiflis first ; Cognard's aide-de-camp and his immediate suite were cut down ; but the main search of the insurgents was after Cognard himself. A Russian picture, largely copied and circulated, represents him seated composedly in his chair, unblenched in feature, unmoved in limb, confronting his assailants. Pity that so artistic a group should have existed only in the artist's own imagination. The Colonel had not, indeed, made good his retreat, but he had done his best thereto by creeping up the large fireplace, of Abkhasian fashion, in the principal room. Unfortunately for him his boots protruded downwards into the open space ; and by these the insurgents seized him, dragged him out to the mid apartment and there despatched him. His colleague, Ismailoff, had a worse fate. Specially obnoxious to the inhabitants of So'ouk-Soo for the impudence of his profligacy, he was first mutilated and then hewn piecemeal, limb by limb. It is said that the dogs were already eating morsels of his flesh before life had left his body. Such atrocities are not uncommon in the East where female honour is concerned, rare else. At So'ouk-Soo Ismailoff was the only instance.

All was now in the hands of the insurgents, who sacked and burnt the houses of Russian tenants, killing all they found. Only twenty Cossacks escaped, and these owed their lives to the humane exertions of the wife of Alexander Shervashiji, who gave them refuge in her own apartments, and kept them there safe till the massacre was over. A few Georgians and Mingrelians, a Pole too, though wearing the Russian uniform, were also spared. "You are not Russians, our quarrel is not with you," said the Abkhasians, as they took the men's arms, and sent them off uninjured to Soukhoun.

On the same afternoon the insurgents attacked the nearest Russian post, that of the Cossacks stationed on coast-guard at Gouda'outa. Here, too, the assailants were successful, the Russians were killed to a man, and their abode was burnt. The Nemesis of Abkhasia had completed another stage of her work.

"To Soukhoun" was now the cry ; and the whole mass of armed men, now about three thousand in number, were in movement southwards along the coast, through thickets and by-paths, to the Russian stronghold. Next morning, from two to three hundred had already crossed the Gumista, a broad mountain torrent north of Soukhoun, and were before, or rather behind the town.

A small crescent of low one-storied houses, mostly wood, Soukhoun-Kalé lies at the bottom of a deep bay with a southerly aspect. At its western extremity is the Old Fort, ascribed to the Genovese, but more probably of Turkish date, whence Soukhoun derives the adjunct of "Kela'at," or "Castle" (Kalé is erroneous, but we will retain it for custom's sake), a square building, with thick walls of rough masonry and a few flanking bastions ; within is room for a mustered regiment or more. From the town crescent some straight lines, indications of roads, run perpendicularly

back across the plashy ground for about a quarter of a mile to the mountains; along these lines are ranged other small wooden houses, mostly tenanted by Russian officers. The garrison-camp, situated on the most unhealthy site of this unhealthy marsh, lies east. Behind is a table-land, whereon in August last there still stood the barracks of a Russian outpost, a hospital, a public vapour-bath, and a few houses. The coast strip is low and swampy, a nest of more fevers than there are men to catch them; the mountains behind, thickly wooded and fern-clad between the trees, are fairly healthy.

At the moment of the first Abkhasian onset, the 9th of August, three Russian vessels—a transport, a corvette, and a schooner, all three belonging to the long-shore fleet of Nicolaieff—were lying in the harbour. But the number of men in the camp was small, falling under a thousand, and of these not above one-half were fit for duty.

Had the Abkhasians been able at once to bring their whole force to bear on Soukhoun-Kalé, town and fort would probably have alike fallen into their hands. At the first approach of the enemy, the Russian garrison had abandoned the plateau and all the upper part of the town, confining themselves to the defensive in the lines along the shore, where they were in a measure covered by the fire of the ships, and in the Fort itself. Meanwhile all the “mixed multitude” of Soukhoun—small Greek and Armenian shop-keepers, Mingrelian and Georgian camp-followers, a few Jews and the like—had fled for refuge, some into the Fort, some on board the vessels in the harbour. But their best auxiliary on this occasion was a violent rain-storm, which at this very moment burst over the mountains, and in a few hours so swelled the Gumista torrent that the main body of Abkhasians mustered behind it were for the whole of the ensuing day unable to cross over to the help of their comrades, the assailants of Soukhoun.

These last had already occupied the plateau, burnt whatever was on it, and, descending into the plain, plundered and set fire to the dwellings of several Russian officers close below. They even advanced some way down the central street, ostentatiously called the “Boulevard” in honour of some little trees planted along it. But here they were checked by the fire of the Russian vessels, and by the few troops whom their officers could persuade to remain without the fort in the lower part of the town.

Two days, two anxious days, matters remained on this footing. But news had been despatched to Poti, and on the third morning arrived a battalion from that place, just as the main body of the Abkhasians, headed by the two sons of Hasan Ma'an, Mustapha and Temshook, crossed the now diminished Gumista and entered Soukhoun.

Fighting now began in good earnest. The numbers on either side were pretty fairly matched, but the Abkhasians, though inferior in arms, were superior in courage; and it required all the exertions of a Polish colonel and of two Greek officers to keep the Russian soldiers from even then abandoning the open ground. However, next morning brought the

Russians fresh reinforcements; and being by this time fully double the force of their ill-armed, undisciplined enemy, they ventured on becoming assailants in their turn. By the end of the fifth day the insurgents had dispersed amid the woods. The Russian loss at Soukhoun-Kalé was reckoned at sixty or seventy men, that of the Abkhasians at somewhat less; but as they carried their dead and wounded away with them, the exact number has never been known. During the short period of their armed presence at Soukhoun they had killed no one except in fair fight, burnt or plundered no houses except Russian, committed no outrage, injured no neutral. Only the Botanical Garden, a pretty copse of exotic trees, the creation of Prince Woronzoff, and on this occasion the scene of some hard fighting, was much wasted, and a Polish chapel was burnt. Public rumour ascribed both these acts of needless destruction, the first probably, the latter certainly, to the Russian soldiery themselves.

The rest of the story is soon told. Accompanied by a large body of troops, the Russian Governor-General of the Western Caucasus went to So'ouk-Soo. He met with no resistance. Cognard and his fellow-victims were buried—we have seen their graves—and the house of Alexander Shervashiji, that in which Cognard had perished, with the palace of the Prince Michael, was gutted and burnt by a late act of Russian vindictiveness. The Nemesis of Abkhasia added these further trophies to her triumph at So'ouk-Soo.

Thus it was in November last. A few more months have passed, and that triumph is already complete. After entire submission, and granted pardon, the remnant of the old Abkhasian nation—first their chiefs and then the people—have at last, in time of full peace and quiet, been driven from the mountains and coast where Greek, Roman, Persian, and Turkish domination had left them unmolested for more than two thousand years, to seek under the more tolerant rule of the Ottoman Sultan a freedom which Russia often claims without her own limits, always denies within them. The Meidan of So'ouk-Soo is now empty. Russians and Abkhasians, Shervashijis and Cossacks, native and foreigner, have alike disappeared, and nothing remains but the fast crumbling memorials of a sad history of national folly rewarded by oppression, oppression by violence, violence by desolation.

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